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MARY MILTON

OR THE

CONQUESTS OF GRACE.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE, EXPERIENCE AND LABORS OF A HUMBLE SERVANT OF CHRIST.

BY

MRS. M. N. LORD.

Come and hear, all ye that fear GOD, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." Ps. 66: 16.

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TO

MRS. E. M. STOCKWELL,

IN TOKEN OF SINCERE FRIENDSHIP

AND ESTEEM,

THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

The authoress of this little work, a bountiful recipient of the grace of God, having comparatively late in life consecrated herself fully to His service, and desiring, if possible, to make some amends for past misspent years, by doing all the good in her power, in pointing sinners to "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world," and believers to a higher, holier state of Christian attainment, has written this sketch in hope of benefitting some, by giving a brief sketch of her own life and Christian experience; to which she has subjoined several letters, addressed to her by her beloved father, now deceased. "Of making many books there is no end," saith the wise man; and being persuaded that many books are made at the present day, which are worse than useless, whose highly colored delineations tend to vitiate the taste, and corrupt the morals of the reader, she gives this truthful account to the public, (some names however being fictitious,) with the confident assurance that, however little good may be derived from its perusal, no harm can result therefrom. If one Christian is led to seek and obtain holiness of heart, without which none can see the Lord, or one sinner the forgiveness of sins; if, in the great day when an assembled universe shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ, she may greet, on the right hand, but one soul, saved or benefitted through this humble instrumentality, the end will be gained; and all the glory shall be given to God, through JESUS CHRIST our Lord. Amen.

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MARY MILTON.

CHAPTER I.

THE FEARFUL DISCOVERY.

MRS. Milton sat alone in her own quiet apartment. Alone, did I say? not quite; for a babe was slumbering in her arms, whom, ever and anon, she folded fondly to her bosom. Her countenance wore an expression of unmixed joy: no storm cloud had yet arisen to darken her bright sky. Scarce two years had passed, since her cousin, George Milton, a young man in every way worthy of her, succeeded in winning her heart and hand, and took her to his own home, to share with him the joys and sorrows of life. Mrs. M possessed a warm, affectionate nature, and though her home was humble and her husband poor, his love, with that of her heavenly Father, was sufficient riches for her, and her cup of happiness was full; and when, in addition to these, a little daughter was laid in her arms, the cup ran over; and now her heart swelled

with gratitude to God, for the many blessings lavished upon her. Alas! she did not see the dark cloud gathering, just ready to burst upon her, and threatening to dispel all the former brightness of her life. A neighbor entered; and with his step the babe awoke. He advanced, and greeting Mrs. M., extended his hands to take the child. After playing with her a moment, he broke out with this startling interrogation; "Mrs. Milton, do you know that your baby is blind?"—Language cannot portray the effect of those words upon that mother's heart. Blind? impossible. But though she could not, would not, credit the painful intelligence, experiments were immediately made, not so much to ascertain its truth, as in hope of proving its untruth. Alas! vain hope! she was at length compelled, with a bleeding heart, to admit it was even so. None but those who have experienced similar trials can comprehend the feelings of these parents, consequent upon this fearful discovery, or the earnest solicitude and tender affection for the child, produced thereby. But the mother was not long to endure these pangs of anguish, or enjoy the pleasure of caring for her dependent one, as the following chapter will show.

CHAPTER II.

THE AFFLICTED HUSBAND.

TWO years have passed since Mrs. Milton's introduction to our readers. We find her, at this time, weak and prostrate, with another little daughter lying by her side. The former bright, joyous expression had faded from her countenance and given place to one of calm sadness. She had for some time felt impressed that she should not long survive the birth of this child, and her emotions in view of this may be better imagined than described. To leave such a family, under such circumstances, must have cost a bitter struggle; but we hear no murmur escaping from her lips. In a few days signs of returning health manifested themselves: she gained sufficient strength to arise from her bed, and measurably assume the care of her babe.

This, however, was of short duration; she was soon again prostrated, and sunk into a state of lethargy, from which she was awakened with the greatest difficulty, and only at short intervals, just sufficient to take a little nourishment or medicine. This continued for a few days, and then terminated in the sleep of death.

Upon Mr. Milton this blow fell with most crushing weight. He had returned his wife's affection, with all its fondness and fervor, and now that she was so suddenly, and forever, snatched from his embrace, his grief was almost insupportable. True, his dear babes were spared him; but so overwhelming was this affliction, that life seemed to have lost all its attractions; and the sunshine wholly to have faded from his sky. The reader may form some idea of the strength of his feelings from the following lines, composed by himself, and inscribed upon his wife's tomb-stone.

"How can I leave the spot, where moldering lies
My lovely wife? no, let my streaming eyes
Once more behold her grave; here let me stay,
And sigh, and weep, and here, Oh let me lay
This body down, and sleep with her in dust,
Until the resurrection of the just.

But stop! my wife sleeps not beneath this sod;
Her only conscious part now rests with GOD.
Far, far from this lone grave her spirit 's flown
To worlds of bliss. Her lovely clay, alone,
Lies moldering here. Yes, yes, consoling thought,
With hope, with comfort, and with bliss 't is fraught.

Now to her golden harp my lov'd one sings;
With joyful heart she sweeps the trembling strings;
Her theme is love; her SAVIOUR'S praise repeats,
And 'Grace, free grace!' sounds through the golden streets;
Lo! from the glorious seats of joy above,
Methinks I hear her speak in tones of love.

'My husband dear, forbear, no longer sigh.
Weep not for me; behold, I dwell on high.
Our dearest babes train up in Wisdom's ways,
Teach them to give to GOD their earliest days.
Embrace thy SAVIOUR in the arms of faith;
Live to thy GOD, my dear, prepare for death.' "

Alas for man! in this world of sorrow, if destitute of the grace of GOD. But such (as we see) was not the case with Mr. Milton. He had early given his heart to his SAVIOUR; and though it is to be feared his beloved one had become his idol, yet, now that this idol was removed, his grief-stricken soul turned once more to his Maker. Oh! who can but admire the love and condescension of our Heavenly Father; who, in compassion for weak, human nature, snatches away those objects which would rival him in the heart, thus leading us to seek for happiness in its only true source, His blessed self. Ah! many may exclaim, with the psalmist, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted."

CHAPTER III.

EARLY IMPRESSIONS, CHARACTERISTICS AND TALENTS OF THE BLIND GIRL.

WHEN the first shock of his severe affliction had somewhat subsided, Mr. Milton's attention was turned to his children. Little Mary, the elder, especially, was the subject of deepest solicitude. Born blind, and thus early deprived of a mother's care, he regarded her with more than paternal tenderness. He seemed to entertain the idea that her misfortunes were so great, that she should never be crossed if it were possible to avoid it; and that her infirmity rendered her quite helpless. She was therefore indulged in every wish, and not allowed to help, or rely on herself in the least. This might have proved a serious injury to her, but for the interposition of a kind Providence. Indeed, she endured many a bitter pang in after life, in consequence of the early undue cultivation of her over sensitive nature; which proved a source of constant trial, until overcome by Divine grace. But notwithstanding his earnest care for the physical comfort of his child Mr. M. did not forget that she had a soul to

be saved or lost; and therefore did not neglect to administer the wholesome correction, which like all children, she sometimes needed.

He also took great pains to instil into her young and tender mind, the principles of Christianity. She can remember, even now, that when a very small child, he would take her away alone and talk to her, in a most solemn and impressive manner, of the duty of loving GOD, and the great sinfulness of not doing so; telling her that if she did not think about GOD, it was sure proof that she did not love Him; and consequently was very wicked. He also gave her to understand that in order to be good, she must experience a change of heart; and taught her, (in connection with these conversations,) this simple prayer: "O LORD, be pleased to forgive my sins, and give me a new heart and make me a good girl, for CHRIST'S sake." This, together with Dr. Watts' familiar stanza, "Now I lay me," &c., she was in the habit of repeating nightly, for years. True, these repetitions may have become somewhat formal, yet she realized to a great extent the import of the words she uttered, and said her prayers with a degree of reverence and solemnity.

It is a great mistake to suppose, as many do, that children are unfit subjects for the operations of the Divine Spirit: as soon as they can understand what is said to them, their religious training should be commenced. The mind of the child is far more susceptible to impressions than that of the adult; and besides,

their simple, confiding nature enables them far more easily to acquire the lesson of faith in GOD, than in riper years. If, therefore, you would have your children saved, commence their instruction very early in life, praying for Divine wisdom to direct: see that your example corresponds with your precept, and be sure that, with the blessing of GOD, their conversion, sooner or later, will be the result. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." There may be exceptions, but this is the rule.

Mary possessed a tender conscience and a serious, thoughtful mind; and these lessons so faithfully given, and set home by the HOLY SPIRIT, made deep and lasting impressions thereon. Sometimes at the close of a long day spent in careless play, the query would suggest itself, Have I thought about GOD to-day? and when forced to answer in the negative, a deep, painful sense of wickedness stole over her, filling her with alarm. These were her first convictions of sin; and it is probable that conversion soon followed; though this was not so strongly marked as to admit of its precise date. Truthfulness was one of her most prominent characteristics; she had a great horror of telling a lie. Sometimes when sobbing and crying as if her little heart would break, in consequence of her father's correction, he would bid her be still, and ask when she would do so; she would reply, now; then he would remind her that if she did not instantly stop

crying she would tell a lie, and every sob would be hushed in an instant.

A hasty temper was one of the darkest features of her character: this sometimes led her to strike or pinch her little sister: but when called to give an account of her conduct, would never tell a falsehood or even equivocate, to screen herself from punishment.

She discovered a remarkable talent for music, at an almost incredibly early age; she commenced to talk when but nine months old; and even before she could utter a word, would hum a tune with astonishing accuracy. She possessed a retentive memory, and took great pleasure in committing songs and hymns, which she sung greatly to the amusement of the family and neighbors.

She evinced from earliest childhood an intense thirst for learning. She attended the district school; and though unable to study a lesson, she was allowed to spell with the rest, and was often at the head of her class, spelling as if by intuition. She frequently received words of praise from visitors of the school, and rewards of merit from her teacher, which afforded her no little satisfaction. But her isolated condition, consequent upon her want of sight, together with her remarkable originality, rendered her manners somewhat awkward and eccentric. This might have proved detrimental to her subsequent usefulness but for a change in her circumstances.

CHAPTER IV.

INCIDENTS OF SCHOOL DAYS.

WE now come to the eighth year of Mary's life Her father had married a sister of his first wife, who supplied the place of a kind and tender mother to his children. One Summer evening, a teacher from the institution for the blind, (then located at Pearl street, Boston,) called to see Mary, and presented her with two sheets of the blind print in raised letters; one containing the alphabet, and the other being the introductory page of an atlas. Mary was in ecstacies; and so eager was she to commence learning to read at once, that she insisted on doing so that night. To Mr. Milton, the idea of his little blind daughter's being educated in this manner, was new and seemed almost incredible. He placed her finger upon a letter, bidding her examine it closely then remove her finger and find the same again. After feeling the letter for some time in order to ascertain its shape, she withdrew her finger, and then replacing it upon the page, in a moment exclaimed with delight, here it is, Father. Mr. Milton fairly wept for joy. A new light

now dawned upon Mary's mind. She would sit for days pouring over her reading, with intense interest. It was now determined to send her to school; arrangements were made accordingly; and in May, A. D. 1839, accompanied by her parents, she entered the institution at Boston and at once commenced her education. She was here thrown comparatively upon her own resources; and sadly missed the parental tenderness and constant indulgence to which she had hitherto been accustomed. Nothing was wanting however, which was really necessary to her comfort; and these lessons of self reliance and self sacrifice were just what she needed; as her disposition would soon have been spoiled by undue indulgence. Though at first very homesick, she soon became acquainted with her mates and attached to her school; pursuing her studies with great eagerness, especially music, which was her chief delight. It was soon ascertained that she possessed a voice of unusual power and compass; and her teacher assigned her a conspicuous place in the choir, and often brought her forward in the presence of visitors. But not being naturally diffident, this gave her no annoyance but rather a pleasure. The principal teacher of music was at that time partially insane; and his insanity was much more apparent at some times than others. He was strongly attached to the blind children, and sympathized with them in all their little troubles. Mary inherited her parents' affectionate nature and the kind and tender treatment of her

teacher won her little heart at once. She also felt a deep sympathy for him in consequence of his infirmity; and so closely did she watch his movements in order to ascertain the exact state of his mind from day to day, that as soon as he had opened the door, entered and closed it, she understood perfectly whether he was more or less rational than on the preceding day. But Mary, though so young, was not without her trials. It soon became known that she was in the habit of praying, and at one time while with some of her mates in her play room, they dared her to pray; and when in the innocence and simplicity of her heart she did so, they burst into a loud laugh. Sometimes also, on hearing her sing her hymns they would make light of them. This seemed to her blasphemous and very wicked, and she shrank from them in terror. The idea of punishment was very dreadful to her, even though administered in its mildest forms. One day she became very angry with a playmate and pinched her. The girl immediately informed her teacher, who came to Mary and asked her what she had done. She frankly and unhesitatingly told her the truth. Then the teacher bade her go and sit in the music room closet, until she came for her. Now some of the scholars were practising in the music room during the whole afternoon; and under other circumstances she would have been delighted to listen; but music had no charms for her at that time; she was punished and felt ashamed and disgraced. When the girls came up from supper, she overheard

one say to another: "Ah! Mary Milton must have bread and water for supper to night." The teacher coming up at that instant, replied: "No she will have as good as the rest, because she told the truth." Mary was highly gratified by this expression of approval, and after eating her supper was allowed to go; feeling like a culprit pardoned and released from prison.

The vacations occurred in May and October, and continued four weeks each. Mary was always glad to visit her parents and friends at home, but soon became uneasy and longed to be again at school. It was a custom of the parents, when their children returned after vacation, to furnish them with little luxuries, which the latter called goodies; these they were in the habit of dividing and exchanging with one another. Mary's mother hearing her speak of this, formed an idea that she was sometimes too liberal for her own interest. On one of these occasions she packed in her trunk, besides other goodies, some nice cakes, telling her she might share with her mates as freely as she wished of the rest, but those she must eat herself, excepting one which she might give to an unfortunate friend. To Mary the command of her parents was law; and she would not disobey the injunction of her mother, though the latter little realized that she was depriving her of the very pleasure she so much wished her to enjoy. When she had given the one cake to her friend her enjoyment of them was over. She fairly

dreaded to touch them, and was heartily glad when the last one was gone.*

In general she rendered implicit obedience to the rules of the school whether she could violate them without detection or not; and was artless and conscientious in all her actions. One exception however we will relate. The bell rang for retiring at quarter before nine and the scholars were required to go immediately to their rooms, and be in bed when the city bells struck nine. One evening Mary was writing and lingered a few moments, after bed time in order to finish. Then taking off her shoes in order to avoid being heard by the teachers, she crept softly up stairs to bed. Her conscience however would not allow her to rest after this underhanded proceeding until she had frankly confessed it to her teacher. She formed a very strong attachment for one of her school-mates, whom we shall call Sarah. Though widely differing from her in disposition, she regarded her with a love nearly approaching idolatry.

The following incident will convey an idea of the strength of her affection. One day by some hasty word she offended Sarah, and learning this, hastened to effect a reconciliation; assuring her she was sorry if she had hurt her feelings, and desiring her forgiveness.—

* This kind step-mother died when Mary had attained her twelfth year, while she was at school. She felt her loss keenly for awhile, but being so constantly from home and having so much to occupy her mind did not realize it as she otherwise would have done.

But Sarah maintained a sullen silence. Mary made several efforts to induce her to speak, but all to no purpose. At last, becoming discouraged, she said to her friends, that as she had tried so many times in vain to make friends with her, she would wait, now, until she spoke to her. Some one overhearing this ran to Sarah with it, who immediately replied, that she should not speak until Mary did. This was a sad state of things for the latter, and especially so from the fact that they roomed together. That night, instead of their usual social chat, not a word was spoken. Mary turned her face to the wall and sobbed as if her heart would break, while Sarah remained apparently unmoved. The next day was Saturday, and the scholars had the afternoon to themselves. But it was no holiday for Mary; she roamed from room to room like one forsaken. Sarah was no longer her friend and she could not be happy. Supper time came and she went to the dining room with the rest, but only tasted her supper: then she returned to the school room and seated herself there, overwhelmed and disconsolate. Pretty soon, Sarah, with some of the other girls, came up and sat down the opposite side of the room, Sarah laughing and chatting with the rest, as if nothing had happened. Mary could endure it no longer: she went to Sarah's seat and commenced pleading, in the most earnest manner, to be restored to her friendship, again assuring her that she was sorry for what she had said, and imploring her to forgive.

She consented to do so, but said she thought they had better be intimate no longer ; this would not satisfy Mary. The thought of being regarded by Sarah only as an ordinary acquaintance, was not to be endured : and she continued to plead most eloquently for a complete reunion, sobs and tears the while attesting the strength of her feelings. Some of the older girls passing through the room, at the time, laughingly declared she was love-sick. Sarah, at last, was persuaded to yield, and Mary was happy again—happy beyond expression.

Study was her greatest pleasure. She was never behind her class ; and while many of the scholars wished to be helped over every difficult task, it was her great delight to work them out, if possible. Thus passed eight years of childhood ; bright, sunny, joyous days, as childhood's are, and perhaps even more so than those of most children. Naturally cheerful and hopeful, she had less of clouds than sunshine.

But the Christian reader may inquire : Did Mary grow in grace during her school days ? We fear not. Study and play engrossed her whole attention : and having, while at school, no personal religious instruction, she gradually lost sight of her duty to GOD : though she still maintained her habit of prayer, and was at times conscious of a degree of love for her SAVIOUR. One day several of the girls were summoned one by one to the office of Dr. Howe, the superintendent of the institution, (Mary among the rest,) in or-

der to converse with them relative to leaving the school. He asked her how she felt about it; informing her that room must be made for other pupils, as several were then waiting to enter. She replied that she did not choose to leave, but if he said so, she supposed she must. He asked her if she did not think she had acquired as good an educatiou as she could have done could she have seen, other circumstances being the same? She replied, yes, better. Then, he asked, what more do you want? This question was unanswerable: she felt indeed that she could ask no more, and submitted without another word.

Vacation day came at last, and a sad day it was to Mary, perhaps the saddest she had ever known. The joy usually experienced on such occasions was totally lost in the thought of leaving forever those dear friends and associates she had loved so long. She was especially grieved to part with her dear Sarah. Separation from her, with no immediate prospect of reunion, seemed a severe affliction. Sad and bitter were the tears she shed on that day; as she bade adieu to teachers, schoolmates and the dear old institution, and retired to her lonely home.

CHAPTER V.

HOME AND PUBLIC LIFE.

MARY had now reached her seventeenth year, being physically well developed, but in mind and judgment not yet mature. Impulsive and extremely sensitive in her disposition, with no knowledge of the world, she was but poorly calculated to plan or care for herself, and was highly favored by a kind Providence, in being permitted to share a father's home and protection. She was now to live with her second step mother, whom her father had married soon after the death of his previous wife. This woman was totally different from the other ; though a Christian, she was stiff, quiet and reserved in her manners, and therefore not so congenial with Mary as if she had been more social They lived together however on the best of terms, and became strongly attached to each other.

Her sister went from home to live, shortly after she left school, and they met but seldom ; which added to her loneliness. This sister was very kind to Mary, and when they were together did all in her power to

make her happy ; insisting that she should accompany her wherever she went, whereas many girls, at her age, might have considered a blind sister an incumbrance. Mary had a half-brother at home, who helped her to while away some lonely hours, by walking with and sometimes reading to her. Her step-moth- had a daughter, then about eight years of age, whom she came to regard with a sisterly love. But for a time she was quite unhappy. The quiet monotony of her present life was so different from the past ; she had little to amuse or divert her. Sarah's absence was a special source of grief: she would sit for days, gloomily pondering over by-gone happy hours spent with her, contrasting them with her present lonely situation.

About two months after their return from school she received a letter from Sarah, containing an invitation to visit her. Her heart leaped with joy at the thought. But would her father consent? She hardly dared ask him, lest he should refuse. Trembling between hope and fear she went to him and presented her request. He hesitated for awhile ; but his desire to gratify his dear daughter finally overcame seeming impracticabilities, and he consented that she should go. A few weeks were spent very pleasantly with her friend ; and then she wrote home asking leave to prolong her stay. This, however, was denied ; her father writing, in answer, that an invitation awaited her, to travel with a gentleman and an old schoolmate, giving

concerts. But she could not bear the thought of again parting with Sarah, and it was finally arranged that she should accompany her home.

When the time arrived for starting on their tour, the gentleman was persuaded to allow Sarah to go with them, on condition that she would demand no wages, save the payment of her traveling expenses; to which arrangement she consented. Mary was not at all disconcerted in presence of an audience; and when things went on smoothly, enjoyed public life very well. They were not very successful, however, and continued in the business but a short time. The company separated, and Mary was left lonely as ever. Some time after this, she and Sarah were applied to, by an acquaintance of the latter, to accompany him and his wife on a similar tour. They had better success this time, and traveled during the Winter, but separated again in the Spring.

These seasons of absence from her dearest friend were always attended with great sadness and despondency: yet she esteemed it a great comfort to pray for and hear from her. Sarah was sometimes negligent in her correspondence, in which case Mary's anxiety became almost insupportable; as her friend's health was quite frail. The following letter in verse was composed on one of these occasions, but never sent, as she received tidings from Sarah before it was committed to paper.

" 'Tis evening. All around me
Is quiet, calm and still:
And thoughts of thee, my precious one,
My lonely bosom fill.
Many long months have winged their flight
Since we were called to part;
But hath time's finger altered
The feelings of our heart?

O, we have loved each other,
Through many changing years:
We 've shared each other's sorrows
And soothed each other's cares.
But the hand of separation
Hath saddened now each heart;
That cruel hand which placeth us
So many miles apart.

Yet oft, in days of absence,
When I could not hear thy voice
Thy kind communications
Have made my heart rejoice:
For the sweet words of affection
Which in them were expressed,
E'er sent a thrill of happiness,
And pleasure to my breast.

But now, alas! they come not
To cheer my lonely way.
My dearest one, why is it
Thou dost so long delay?
O, thou knowest not the sadness
It brings to my poor heart,
To be so long neglected
While we are far apart.

But I'll not talk of that, dear,
To cause thee grief and pain;
I only wish to ask thee,
To write to me again.
Week after week is passing;
Still I do not hear from thee.
Why is it that thou dost not write?
What can the reason be?

I know thou art not strong, dear,
And I fear thou must be ill.
Wilt thou not write me if thou canst?
I know thou'lt say, "I will."
Through the kindness of our Heavenly Friend,
Which He hath shown to me,
My health is good, and has been so
Since I was last with thee.

And hoping soon to hear from thee,
I bid thee now adieu;
Believe me still, as ever
Devoted, fond and true.
May Heaven's choicest blessing
Around thy pathway shine;
Is the earnest wish and fervent prayer
Of one who's truly thine.

But notwithstanding her great grief, occasioned by these separations, she recognized, to a certain extent, the Divine hand in them; fearing they were inclined to idolize one another, and therefore the LORD saw best that they should be parted. If asked at this period of her life, whether she loved the Saviour, she would reply, I hope I do; but her real knowledge of the fact was very limited. She desired, above all things,

to be a Christian, yet knew but little of the witness of the Spirit with her spirit, that she was such ; (Rom. 8 : 16.) without which none should rest satisfied.— Mary did not feel her need of this, for a time ; but, at length, her mind was strongly exercised in relation to it, by hearing accounts of others' experience, differing from her own. It became a subject of serious inquiry whether she were really a child of GOD. She did not particularly desire an experience exactly similar to those she heard related ; but to become acquainted with her true condition, and to have her mind settled in regard to it. The following lines were often in her thoughts, and were an exact expression of her feelings.

" 'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought ;
Do I love the LORD, or no,
Am I His, or am I not?"

She betook herself to earnest prayer relative to this subject ; and GOD, who delights to hear the cries, even of His weakest children, soon gave her an answer.— It did not come like the rushing of a mighty wind, or burst upon her mind in sudden, powerful light, as some express it ; but in a " still, small voice ;" a quiet, precious assurance that she was reconciled to GOD. She was satisfied.

Dear reader, are you desirous and determined to be a Christian ? Do not rest without the evidence that you are converted. It is our privilege to know that we are the children of GOD, by His Spirit, &c. 1 John

iv : 13. Do not measure your experience by that of another, but accept what GOD pleases to give you; though it be but the slightest whisper. Mary did not now feel it her duty publicly to confess CHRIST, by uniting with the church. Her parents, (formerly Baptists,) about this time joined the society of Friends: and she frequently attended their meetings, some of which she enjoyed very well, yet received there but little real food for her soul. She was more at home with the Methodists. There was a church of that order in the place where she resided, but for certain reasons she did not feel like connecting herself with them, though that was her usual place of worship, and she often took part in their social exercises. At one time, in order to raise funds for the benefit of the Church, a festival was held at which Mary's presence was earnestly solicited, especially, that they might be favored with her music, but she positively refused to attend,—heartily discountenancing such proceedings. Not that she objected to social gatherings as such: but when professed Christians resorted to Satan's devices, as grab bags, ring cakes, &c., to sustain GOD'S worship, she ever felt it her duty to lift her voice against it. She gradually came to think it was not necessary for her to belong to any church: but was afterward led to see her mistake. Had she been more fully possessed of the love of GOD, she would have felt her need of a home with some class of His people.

She improved every opportunity of assisting herself

by singing and teaching music. Mr. B. who accompanied her and Sarah on their second tour, buried his wife and shortly after married another. In process of time Mary received a letter containing a request from Sarah, to meet her at the residence of Mr. B., and try concerting again, attended by him and his new wife. They lived near Sarah's parents, and Mrs. B. became acquainted with her before seeing Mary. She was a lady of more than ordinary intelligence, and quite fastidious in regard to her own and others' personal appearance. She at first formed a very favorable impression of Sarah, from her pleasing manners, fine form, fair face, and neat, tasteful dress. She had often heard her husband speak of Mary, in the highest terms, and pictured her as almost perfect, both physically and mentally. Unfortunately, however, she possessed none of the outward attractions of her friend, and, on meeting her, Mrs. B. found her so far beneath what her fancy had painted, in external appearance, that she was shocked and disappointed; and for a while gave Sarah decidedly the preference in her friendship. But on further acquaintance her feelings changed, and she became one of Mary's warmest friends. Mrs. B. was a Christian; but had not sufficient grace, always, to control her temper. Her patience, as also that of her husband, was sometimes sorely tried in their dealings with Sarah. The three had frequent and sharp contentions, which were a great grief to Mary. She was friendly to them all,

and desired that they should be so to one another, using every means in her power to reconcile them ; yet always speaking disapprovingly to the one whom she felt to be in the wrong, although it might be her dearest friend. This often brought bitter trials upon her, causing Sarah to doubt her friendship.

Mary entertained very humble views of her own spiritual attainments, and never liked to be praised in this respect. One evening, when about to engage in their accustomed devotions, Mrs. B. requested her to lead in prayer ; adding, "You are the only one to whom we can look for example." Mary was deeply pained and heartily wished she had not said that.

After they separated, a very pleasant and profitable correspondence was maintained between herself and Mrs. B. and many delightful visits were enjoyed at the residence of the latter.

At the close of this tour, Mary had a class in instrumental music, in her own neighborhood, with which she was quite successful. Thus glided on eight more years of her life, bringing her to the age of twenty-four. We find her at this time enjoying a comfortable assurance of the favor of GOD, and generally living according to the light she had received. There was one thing, however, that sometimes troubled her, namely an undue indulgence of mirthfulness, when in company of young people ;. in foolish talking, jesting, &c. and when, after such indulgence she would retire to her own room, for secret prayer, her thoughts were

scattered and her soul lean and empty of GOD'S favor.

Perhaps the reader may be curious to know whether Mary ever mourned or murmured on account of her infirmity. We answer, she did not: never having enjoyed the blessing of sight, she could not appreciate or miss it as she otherwise would have done. But there was one thing that marred her happiness, and cast a shadow over her whole life. Her strong affection was the ruling element in her character, and was constantly reaching out after some object on which to centre, and from which she might receive those pleasures flowing alone from pure, unselfish love. She sometimes found herself rebelling against GOD; charging Him with unkindness in giving her such a nature never to be gratified. Alas, for her lack of faith, and of submission to the Divine will! Would there were fewer examples of this fearful sin! She was highly indignant at the thought, that whatever virtues or attractions she might possess, must be entirely overlooked, from so trivial a consideration as lack of sight: and sometimes felt almost sure, that there must be some one in the wide world, who, could he only know the strength of her affection, would choose her for a companion for life. But our GOD is a jealous GOD, and will not brook idolatry; yet how slow is poor human nature to learn the lesson of supreme love to Him. Thanks be to His grace that this may be learned, though it be through severest discipline; as it was in Mary's case.

CHAPTER VI.

BACKSLIDING AND AFFLICTIONS.

IT was about this time that some gentlemen, then residing at South Boston, purposed to form a concert company. Hearing of Mary from some of her friends at the Asylum, they wrote her, soliciting her services as Soprano singer. Though now capable of thinking and acting for herself, she consulted her parents in all her plans and did not enjoy engaging in anything without their consent. Her step-mother was conscientiously opposed to her following that business; but as she and her father had no scruples in regard to it, she would not stand in the way. Mr. Milton esteemed it a great pleasure to care for his dear, afflicted daughter; and, notwithstanding his limited circumstances, preferred that she should always remain at home; feeling a deep anxiety about her during her absence. But knowing that she chose to earn her own livelihood if possible, he never objected when such opportunities were presented. A favorable answer was therefore given to the letter, and in a few days two of the gentlemen waited on her

for the purpose of making the necessary arrangements.

One of these we will introduce to the reader as Clarence Clayton, the other as Norman Norton. The former was almost totally blind ; the vision of the latter also was slightly impaired. Clayton possessed a remarkably intelligent and highly cultivated mind ; having lost his sight just as he had completed his studies, preparatory to entering upon the medical profession. Modest and unassuming, yet easy, graceful and attractive in manners and conversation, he readily won the esteem and confidence of strangers.

Norton, on the contrary, was awkward and reserved, and his whole appearance rather repulsive. He was poorly calculated to gain friends on short acquaintance. After they had taken their leave Mr. Milton (usually correct in his observations of human nature,) remarked of Clayton, one might know that fellow was good, just by looking at him. In about three weeks Mary left her home for South Boston, where she and her company remained awhile to practice, in order to prepare for the stage, then took a tour through some of the principal cities of Massachusetts.

Mrs. D., the alto singer was a young married lady, gay, proud and fashionable, having been brought up in the city, and formerly an opera singer. Mary was not much accustomed to such society, and felt ill at ease in her presence, especially as Mrs. D., was constantly reminding her of her inferiority, particularly in respect to dress. Her own wardrobe was abundant, elaborate

and costly and she took great pains to display it for Mary's especial benefit. Mary enjoyed examining these nice things but was pained and mortified by contrasting them with her own plain, cheap and scant attire. Mrs. D's., whole manner toward her was expressive of contempt and disdain, in public as well as in private, often exciting the indignation of their audience. No wonder that under such circumstances, associated wholly with strangers, Mary was homesick and lonely. The gentlemen were soon aware of this and expressed a deep sympathy for her, especially Clayton. He advised her not to be put down by Mrs. D., assuring her she could sing as well as she; and saying many other little flattering things by way of encouragement. Norton, though less fluent in expression and agreeable in manner, was equally kind in his way; making every provision for her comfort, and, as far as possible, even anticipating her wishes. He also gave unmistakable tokens of a sentiment deeper and stronger than that of ordinary friendship or sympathy. But this found no response in Mary's heart. His kindness won her respect and excited her gratitude; but she was sometimes prevented from giving expression even to these by the fear that he might mistake her meaning and be encouraged to hope that his feelings were reciprocated.

But, notwithstanding all her efforts to conquer herself, her affections were strongly drawn out toward Clayton; though she had heard while at South Bos-

ton that he was engaged to a young lady residing there. Indeed he seemed to use every means to win *her* regard, and it was wonderful, considering his lack of sight, how adroitly he would manage at the close of a concert to find her hand, conversing in the most agreeable manner of the evening's entertainment and inquiring sympathizingly as to her welfare and happiness.

One night Mary retired to her room perplexed and distressed. They had had a leisure evening which the company had passed together, Clayton paying her the most flattering attentions. What should she do? She could not think of receiving as her own what rightfully belonged to another; and resolved to allow no further advances from him; praying that GOD would help her to carry out this resolution. But the very next afternoon as she was pacing up and down the parlor of the hotel in a gloomy, abstracted mood, Clayton came in and seating himself on the sofa, requested her to come and sit beside him. Notwithstanding her decision the past evening, she seemed powerless to refuse and so complied with his request. He took her hand and after conversing a while on some trivial subject in his peculiarly entertaining manner, he gave her a short lecture on physiology in which subject he knew her to be deeply interested. Thus occupied, she remained oblivious to all around her until tea time. Mary might almost be said to have been a worshiper at the shrine of intellect. Clayton was her exact ideal in this respect and she

regarded him with profound reverence. Soon after this he desired her to teach him the manual alphabet used by deaf mutes, which she had learned while at school in order to converse with Laura Bridgman. One day while sitting beside her, he spelled in her hand three little words which have thrilled thousands of hearts, with rapture and wild delight—I love you. O that she might believe those words sincere! O that she could enjoy the exquisite pleasure of being loved by the possessor of such a mind. But supposing his affections were given to another she felt that he must be trifling; and could not forbear asking did you ever tell M. so? He gave an evasive answer at first but finally assured her that he and M. were nothing to each other. Her mind was thus set at ease on that point. But there was still one drawback to her full enjoyment of his love and attentions. She realized her danger of backsliding from GOD by allowing her supreme affections to centre upon an earthly object. With her characteristic frankness she imparted her fears to Clayton. But he apprehended no such danger. On the contrary he expressed the idea that the more we love our earthly friends, the stronger will be our devotion to GOD. Alas! how little does unregenerate man understand the nature and tendencies of the human heart!

For a time, and to a certain extent, Mary restrained her feelings lest she should wander from the LORD. But at length Clayton being impatient of these restraints,

and exacting in his demands of her confidence and affection, she gave over the struggle with herself, and plunged into the most wild and excessive idolatry. Lured by the spell of inordinate affection she gradually neglected her secret devotions, desecrated the Sabbath and absented herself from the house of GOD, because she could not persuade him to accompany her. Thus things continued to grow worse and worse until she became a confirmed backslider. O, who can measure the fearful consequences of once laying down the Christian's armor? So long as the suggestions of the tempter and an unsanctified nature are resisted, steadfast in faith, no fall need be feared. But if the warfare cease, the enemy comes in like a flood; sin and not holiness obtains the mastery and the soul is "led captive by the devil at his will." We are led to admire and adore the wisdom and love displayed by the great Creator in using even sin as an instrument in bringing the sinner to himself. Not that GOD justifies evil in the transgressor but takes advantage of it to accomplish his salvation. Happy for the soul thus led astray if through great tribulations it may escape the fatal snare and return to its GOD.

Mrs. D., did not long remain in the company, as they all became disgusted with her. When she left, her place must be supplied by another, and Mary proposed Sarah as a substitute, to which proposal they assented. M. was surprised at the change in her feelings toward her old friend. Having given her affections to

another she could not greet her with that warmth and cordiality which characterized their meetings in former days. Sarah noticed this with regret but had not long to mourn the loss of her love as it was more than replaced by that of Norton, who soon after his introduction to her claimed her for his bride. The four traveled together a short time, Norton's father acting as their agent: he occasioned some trouble however which soon resulted in the separation of the company, shortly after which the above mentioned alliance took place. From Clayton's words and manner toward her, Mary had good reason for cherishing, as she did, the fond hope of one day becoming his wife. True he did not fully commit himself in this respect; yet, unsophisticated and confiding as she was, this fact at first excited no suspicions. But as months and years passed and the event was still delayed, she began to feel serious apprehension, that all was not right. She also noticed, from time to time, unmistakable signs of unfaithfulness. The little attentions and tokens of affection once so lavished upon her were gradually withdrawn and bestowed upon others, sometimes even in her presence. One who has loved and trusted like Mary may imagine the anguish of her poor heart on witnessing such proofs of treachery. She intimated her suspicions to Clayton; but he laughed at her as being foolish to harbor such thoughts, assuring her that the little things she referred to, were mere acts of courtesy and of common

occurrence in city life ; avowing himself true to her as ever. Thus reassured, her fears were measurably quieted for a time ; but confidence once lost was not readily regained. She ever after narrowly watched his conduct, marking the least indication of coldness or neglect toward herself, or familiarity with others. Engagements in music brought them more or less into each other's society for six years ; during which time poor Mary was alternately cheered by hope, and distressed and almost distracted by doubts and fears.

Soon after their separation from Norton's party, Clayton accompanied her on a visit to her parents. They were still favorably impressed with his appearance and not at all displeased with the prospect of their union. But on a subsequent visit he was quite attentive to her step-mother's daughter, which again dashed the cup of happiness from Mary's lips. She several times conversed with him seriously upon the subject, at last begging him if he really loved H., frankly to tell her so ; assuring him she would not stand in the way of their happiness. But he protested that his heart was all her own ; and that his conduct toward her sister was prompted by no feelings other than of friendship. His words and actions, however, to Mary seemed contradictory and she could not fully believe him. O that she could, by a decided act of her will, free herself from him forever ! But it seemed impossible to break the spell that bound her ; so she still clung to him and suffered on. Hitherto the sisters had main-

tained the strictest silence respecting their feelings toward Clayton. But one morning during his absence, Mary ventured to ask H., if she did not wish to see him. This led to a long conversation which increased Mary's pain and distress of mind. H. informed her that Clayton had promised to make her his wife, stating that he was under no obligations to Mary. But judging from her appearance that Mary did not so understand it, and that their intimacy was a source of great trial to her, she had decided to give him up, but expressed the strongest confidence in his affection for her, and was quite sure he would be sadly disappointed on learning her decision. At the conclusion of this conversation, H. read to Mary several of Clayton's letters, which were full of expressions of tender affection. O, how her heart bled! she was now beginning to reap the reward of her doings. She had miserably backslidden from GOD, and placed her supreme affections on a poor mortal who had proved false and dissappointed her hopes; and thus she was led measurably to realize her wanderings, and to adopt the language of the poet;

"The dearest idol I have known
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from Thy throne,
And worship only Thee."

She was now almost fully persuaded to bid Clayton farewell forever. Had she loved him less ardently, she would have rejoiced to learn that his connection

with her sister was at an end, but such was not the case. Her disinterested devotion to him rendered his happiness even dearer to her than her own; and she earnestly desired that if H., was his chosen, she would not disappoint him. She therefore endeavored to persuade her not to do so, but H. remained firm. She had made up her mind to return to a former lover whom she had discarded for the sake of Clayton. She was a good girl, but naturally rather deficient in stability of mind. This rivalry caused a breach in the friendship of the two sisters, that was never healed until the death of H., which occurred not long after.

She was not probably to blame in this transaction, yet it was impossible for Mary to regard her with the same feelings as before. She peacefully fell asleep in JESUS, after a comparatively short illness of consumption. Mary concealed, as long as possible these things from her parents, as she could not bear that the faults of one she so dearly loved should be exposed. Her dear father's sympathizing heart was deeply pained on learning the weight of grief, beneath which his beloved daughter was laboring, and would have been still more so, had he known her backslidings from GOD; though there were seasons when she measurably returned to her Saviour, and she enjoyed a degree of peace and confidence in Him, which she communicated to her beloved parent, causing him greatly to rejoice. The subjoined letters evince the intense interest he felt in her spiritual, as well as temporal

welfare. Her partially formed resolutions to leave Clayton completely vanished when next they met. She could not withstand the power of his charms, and again yielded to his fascinating influence and fair words.

Her parents, about this time, removed to the State of Maine and she spent a few months with them there. Their new home was situated but a few miles distant from her old friend Sarah, and she improved an opportunity of visiting her. Great and sad were the changes in Sarah's circumstances since they parted. She had become the mother of two children, one of whom lived but a few months; the other, a little boy at this time about a year old, was left in the care of his grandmother; his mother being prostrated, and gradually wasting away by a lingering disease. Since their last meeting she had united with the M. E. Church; but mind as well as body seemed broken by infirmity, and she manifested little sense of spiritual things. Poor Mary was in no condition to aid or comfort her in this respect; though, wretched as was her own state at the time, she felt deeply interested in her friend's eternal happiness. She had but one more interview with her, previous to her death, and this no more satisfactory than the first.

Sarah continued to grow weaker in body and mind until at length she became wholly unconscious, and thus soon passed away. But Mary's affections were so bound up in another, that she did not mourn her

loss, as years before she would have done. While with her parents at this time, she became acquainted with a young lady, then attending school in that place, whom we will call Clara Taylor. She possessed a mind of rare intelligence, and a remarkably affectionate and confiding nature, which attractions could not fail to win Mary's heart, and they soon became very intimate. At the close of the school, Clara extended to her an invitation to visit her, which was accepted. The whole family was highly intelligent and very interesting; and the visit was productive of great pleasure to M., though had she been fully in the enjoyment of the love of GOD, their society would not have been so congenial, as they were not Christians, but firm adherents to that fatally erroneous doctrine termed spiritualism. In former years, Mary had somewhat investigated this phenomenon, had become convinced it was not of GOD, and that her duty was to have nothing to do with it. As a matter of courtesy, however, while with this family, she sometimes sat with them in their circles, though she frankly told them, she was not interested in the subject. At their earnest request, she afterward visited them again,—this time accompanied by Clayton. Before the time allotted for their visit had expired, it was proposed that they should remain with the family awhile, and instruct the children in music; which proposal was acceded to, and they continued there a year.

Mary, at first, felt very happy in this new situation: but happiness, when not the result of holiness, and union with GOD, is false and fleeting. She soon discovered that she had another rival, in her hitherto beloved Clara. O, how long must her poor heart endure such trials? Why could she not at once break away from one so utterly unworthy of her love? Perhaps an answer to this query may be found in the fact that, notwithstanding his heartlessness, she had some proofs of his regard for her. He seemed to appreciate her talents and abilities, and when they were alone was never weary of engaging with her in intelligent conversation. He also consulted her in all his plans, and appeared highly to value her counsel and sympathy. She then believed, as she continued to do, that he preferred her to all others, but that his love for her was not sufficiently strong to overcome his propensity for trifling. It seemed to her, at times, that his conduct would almost drive her mad. Varied emotions alternately struggled in her bosom. Sometimes she wished, O, so heartily, to put an end to her existence; but she could not, she dared not. Then she would long to lean her head upon his breast, and die there. Still, at other times, see wished she could play the coquette, and thus repay his cruelty. Hatred and revenge were strangers to her nature, until excited by a rival. Her friend Clara, to whom she had become so warmly attached, now became the object of bitter hate. She did not express this to her; (though their

intercourse was characterized by marked coldness and reserve,) but she did not hesitate to talk to Clayton, in the most severe manner, of their united unkindness to her. This, however, did not seem to irritate nor move him in the least; yet when her bleeding heart would vent itself in sobs and tears, his anger was excited, and harsh and unkind words spoken, until it seemed she could endure no more. O, had she not suffered enough, in consequence of her backslidings, to be weary of them, and return fully to GOD? She was indeed proving by bitter experience, that the way of the transgressor is hard. That blessed SPIRIT, which, during all these years, had at times striven with her, continued to do so, and now with increased frequency and power. She, sometimes in Clayton's presence, gave utterance to its convictions, by exclaiming, O, how wicked I am! One day, hearing her say this, he expressed a fear, that the idea of her wickedness would become a mania with her. O, foolish, depraved and ignorant man, to attribute the work of the Holy Ghost to a disordered mind! We are reminded of the ancient Jews, who accused our Saviour of casting out devils through the prince of devils. Yielding, measurably, to these precious influences, Mary now betook herself to reading her Bible, and secret prayer, earnestly desiring the forgiveness of her sins, and a complete restoration to GOD'S favor, yet little realizing the firey ordeal through which she must pass, in order to reach that blessed state. We close this chapter with

the following letters. The first bears date, August 29th, 1860, and reads thus:

My own dear Daughter,

Thou canst hardly realize the satisfaction and comfort thy dear letter afforded me. Although it pained me to hear of thy sadness, it gave me a feeling of quietness, and a confirmed assurance, as I told thee, that my dear child would not be *greatly moved:* and I felt, I trust, a degree of thankfulness, to our great and good Father in Heaven, for His condescending kindness to us, in thus calming our minds under such trying circumstances.

I hardly know what to say respecting Clayton: thou sayest he has his weak points; if one of his weaknesses is to love another, while professing to love thee or to let thee remain in ignorance about it, I *trust and hope from my heart*, my dear M. will be enabled, by the strong power of God, to turn away from, and *never more* put confidence in one, who can prove himself so much beneath the *notice*, not to say the *love* of a true and confiding heart. I say not this to excite any unkind feelings towards him; but as true love is blind, I feel that thou needest some one who has eyes to lead thee by the hand.

It gives me much rest to hear of thy resolution, not to travel with him unmarried and *O, dear daughter, beware* of his protestations of innocence or love, for how much better to part *now* than to be united and then

to find thy love unrequited : that I believe would be death to my poor dear child ; but I have a great assurance that thou wilt in time, rise above these things, *and enjoy life yet.* Yes, I repeat it, *enjoy life yet.*

I desire to be truly thankful, that I believe thou hast been kept in innocence, since thy first acquaintance with him : how much comfort this affords me ; I feel, my poor, dear one, to say to thee, that although there appears no way for thee to gain a living, the great and blessed Being, who has fed us all our lives long, is able to open a way when there is none ; and I feel free to say that I believe this way will be opened. Let us trust in Him with all our hearts, and obey Him in all things. Remember, dear child, our *hearts* and *home*, are open to receive thee, whenever thou seest fit to come.

Please excuse mother from writing, as it is hard, as thou knowest, for her to write, but she sends much love, I assure thee, instead. Do write often and without reserve, for I feel deeply interested for thee. With true affection

THY FATHER.

We will add one more in this connection, trusting it may be profitable and interesting to the reader.

March 31st, 1861.

MY OWN DEAR MARY :

I want to see thee very much, but as that cannot be, just now, I will try and write a few lines. And

what shall I say to my dear child? I call thee child; for the same fatherly feeling remains in my breast now that dwelt there when thou wast a little child, and lay in my arms,—dear to my heart. I look back to that time, and my heart grows soft; and feelings of tenderness not to be described take possession of my mind. *Thy dear mother*, and the dear and cherished remembrance of those other parts of my own soul, who have *gone home*, seem to call my mind to look *forward* to that important period when we shall all meet, I humbly hope and pray, to part no more, forever.

O my dear daughter, is not this thougbt cheering, while toiling on in this changing and trying state?—May it stimulate us to do our duty, and be obedient to our Heavenly Father's commands. My mind is very often turned towards thee, and my daily intercessions are for thee, that thou may'st be found walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless. O my child, let me entreat thee to cherish the precious influences of the Blessed Spirit. Lift up thy heart, constantly, for heavenly help. Remember, He notices the weakest aspirations for aid, and will give power to His poor children, even over the powers of darkness, if in humbleness of mind and spirit, they follow Him, and sincerely desire to obey Him. I hope the reading of the Scriptures, and serious meditation, and constant prayer, are not neglected. I know that difficulties are in the way, but a willing mind is ac-

cepted. Suffer this word of exhortation, dear M., and feel not that father is too severe.

We are favored with good health, with the exception of a bad cold, (from which mother is recovering) and are getting along, as usual, very comfortably. Thy letter was received with much satisfaction, I was glad to hear of the success which attended your exhibition; was also peculiarly gratified to hear of thy feeling of hope and confidence in a guardian power that takes care of all. Trust my dear, trust in this Almighty Power and if every thing does not work seemingly in your favor, all things shall work for thy good. Be assured of this, and do not despond.

Spring is approaching, and I hope ere long to see my dear, dear daughter. We should be very glad of a visit from thee. Shall we have it? Please write soon and let us know your future plans &c.

With kind feelings I remain

THY AFFECTIONATE FATHER.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WANDERER'S RETURN.

SOON after they became members of the Taylor family, Clara's health became quite delicate, and Clayton's professional services were often called into requisition in her behalf—Mary thought, sometimes, oftener than was necessary.

One Summer evening, after she became convalescent, she stated to her mother, in Mary's hearing, that the Doctor had invited her to a walk, and asked her consent. This afforded to Mary new proof of his intimacy with Clara, which had been for some time increasingly apparent: and she felt that she could and would endure it no longer. Calling Clayton aside, she asked him, seriously, if he did not think it best that they should be separated. He replied that it might be as well temporarily to suspend their connection---intimating that it might be spiritually a benefit to her. She informed him that if the step were taken, it would be final, so far as she was concerned: upon which he seemed desirous to evade the subject, and immediately left the room, saying it was

of no use talking about it, as it only injured her feelings.

As the sound of his footsteps died away, she fully resolved that the ties which bound her should be broken, and *that forever*. But feeling that in order to carry out this resolution she must have strength from above, she exclaimed from the very depths of her heart, "O LORD, strengthen me for this!"—a brief petition; but the power of prayer consists not in the multitude of words. How wonderfully that prayer was answered! While Clayton and Clara were enjoying their walk, Mary was alone with GOD. She took up her Bible, silently praying to be directed to some passage befitting her present feelings and circumstances, and opened at once to the 54th chapter of Isaiah's prophecy. The first few words made but little impression on her mind; but as she continued to read, her emotions became overwhelming. The chapter seemed entirely new to her, though she had several times read the Bible through by course. It appeared that GOD Himself was speaking to her, almost with audible voice, in those precious, precious words, commencing with the fifth, and ending with the eleventh verse. Tears streamed copiously down her cheeks—not tears of sorrow, now, but of joy and gratitude unspeakable, in view of her Heavenly Father's condescension.

O, let all who read join with us to magnify the matchless grace displayed toward this poor wanderer!

During all these years of backsliding her Almighty Friend had, from time to time, convinced her of her sins, and urged her return to Himself, not only by the influences of His blessed Spirit, but by suffering her earthly hopes again and again to be crushed. And now that she began in earnest to enter anew into covenant with her God, He graciously manifested His willingness to receive her in this wonderful and unexpected manner. Peace, unutterable peace, took possession of her desolate heart; and the strong confidence inspired by those precious promises caused her completely to triumph over her present sorrow, and in prospect of the final separation.

There were parts of the chapter which she did not then realize as applicable to her case: yet she had indubitable evidence that the divine hand had directed her to it. She afterward related the circumstance to Clayton, and read to him what had so powerfully impressed her own mind. He could not, of course, comprehend her feelings; though he seemed to think it remarkable that she should have opened to that passage.

About this time she once offered prayer in his presence, which was the only instance of the kind during their long acquaintance. This fact was afterward a source of bitter regret. She had allowed her light, as a Christian, to become almost totally eclipsed by the false illumination of earthly love, and had allowed him to drag her steadily downward, instead of ex-

erting an elevating influence upon him. She did not at first realize this, but became painfully aware of it when too late to make amends. O, how loving the hand that plucked her out of the snare in which she had been taken, and withheld from her the gratification of desires, which, if granted, might have proved her eternal ruin. How wise the injunction of the inspired Apostle—"Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers"? 2 Cor. vi. 14.

Let us here pause in our narrative, to give a word of advice to Christians, seeking companions for life. Many seem to have an idea that their spiritual and temporal interests are entirely separate—that GOD leaves his children to plan for themselves in things pertaining to this life. Such do not consider that every act they perform bears directly or indirectly upon their eternal destiny; otherwise they would not neglect, even in the most trivial business transactions, to invoke the Divine counsel and direction and especially in matters of so great importance as that of marriage. If a follower of CHRIST you have no right to any will of your own, aside from His. Yet how many lose sight of this fact, and seem to feel perfectly free to act as they please.

Most persons select partners whom the Lord never designed for them: hence it is that we see so much unhappiness in the marriage relation. Guard well your affections; or if, like poor Mary, you have no control over yourself in this respect, earnestly implore

help from above. Do not rush madly on as she did, and thus be compelled to drink the bitter, bitter cup. GOD "does not afflict willingly"; yet how often do His poor, wayward children drive Him to the necessity of chastening, in order to save them.

Mary became strongly attached to Mrs. Taylor, and had every reason to consider her one of her warmest friends. Sometimes, when her poor heart must have vent, she unburdened her feelings to her;—avoiding, however, any reference to Clara. Always, on these occasions, she received words of tender sympathy from Mrs. T.; though she sometimes expressed the idea that Clayton and Mary were not congenial—and that, should she meet one whose temperament and disposition harmonized fully with her own, she would discover that she had never loved C. as she was capable of loving.

In a few days Mary made preparations for leaving the place where she had spent so many happy, and so many unhappy hours. On the morning of her departure she had a long, sad interview with Clayton. She had often heard him remark, that shedding tears was an indication, in a man, of a weak mind, and she had very seldom known him to weep. Now, however, locked in each other's embrace, both seemed alike overcome with grief. Their sobs and mingling tears told well the emotions of hearts too full for many words.

He did not acknowledge himself in the wrong, or

invite her to remain with him ; though he expressed to her the belief that he should never meet another who would prove to him so kind and sympathizing a friend as she had ever been. This manifest appreciation of her love was like balm to her wounded spirit.

She did not take a final leave of the family, as she intended to return and spend some time after he left, which he talked of doing soon. She found a cordial welcome in the home of her parents, but did not at this time make known to them the state of affairs between Clayton and herself.

In about two weeks after this her mother, at her request, took her again to the residence of Mr. Taylor. On arriving there she learned, to her great surprise and perplexity, that Clayton still remained with them, though absent for the day with Mr. T. on business. Not wishing, as yet, to divulge her secret to her mother, she concluded to tarry, as at first intended. Being very curious to know how Clayton would receive her, she requested the family not to inform him, on his return, of her presence. She approached him softly, and took his hand without speaking. He recognized her at once ; but his voice as he greeted her expressed as plainly as words could have done, painful surprise. But suddenly recollecting himself, he instantly assumed his natural tone and manner, and conversed with her cordially as usual.

On the next morning, as Mrs. Milton started for home, Mrs. Taylor left the house with her, and stood

for a long time beside the carriage, engaged in private conversation. This caused Mary to feel painfully suspicious that all was not right; which, however, was soon forgotten—and, once more in the society of her loved one, who now appeared comparatively kind and affectionate toward her, she seemed to forget the past, and revelled in the delicious enjoyment of his presence.

But this sweet, though poisonous draught, was once more to be snatched from her lips. Her Heavenly Father's loving eye was still upon her, and noting the inefficiency of her will to overcome her idolatrous love, He was ready with His aid, which came this time through human instrumentality. In a few days she received a brief note from her mother, simply stating her intention to come the next week and take her home, and requesting her to be ready.

This recalled and confirmed Mary's former impression that something was wrong. Desiring, if possible, to obtain some light on the subject, she informed Mrs. T. what her mother had written. She affected surprise, and the affair still continued a mystery.

On the 11th of June, 1861, with an aching heart, she once more bade adieu to her loved one, and accompanied her mother to her home. On the way, she learned from her that Mrs. T. had expressed some suspicion concerning her, and attributed the difficulty between Clayton and herself to Mary alone; speaking in the highest terms of him. Mrs. Milton was

far from believing C. to be innocent; nor did she consider Mary so. On the contrary, she thought her worthy of severe censure, which she did not hesitate to administer—apparently regarding her almost unworthy of a daughter's place in the hearts of her parents. Mary felt, indeed, and was free to confess, that her course, in every respect, had not been justifiable: yet she was painfully conscious that her mother little understood her nature, or the motives which had actuated her, and therefore condemned her with undue severity.

It is not our design to avenge injuries inflicted on Mary, by exposing to the public the faults of those who may have wronged her—the love we bear to our GOD and our fellow-beings will not admit of this—but a narration of these facts is necessary, in order to carry out our purpose in illustrating the conquests of grace in her heart. Let the reader, therefore, exercise that charity which covers a multitude of sins, and judge not hastily nor harshly of any.

Mrs. Milton was a good woman, and desired to act and feel right in every respect, but had strong prejudices which were not easily conquered. Time overcame them, however, in regard to Mary's case, and she became the same kind and loving mother as before. What might have been Mrs. Taylor's motives in the course she pursued we cannot tell. She doubtless felt that it was for Mary's interest to be separated from Clayton, and perhaps thought it her duty

to take measures to effect a separation. Be this as it may, Mary ever recognized the hand of the LORD in it, and continued to feel kindly toward her former friend. Thus shut out from the confidence of her parent, and having parted, perhaps forever, from one dearer than life, she now drank the bitter cup to its very dregs. The only sweet drop it contained was the assurance that He, who seeth not as man seeth, knew her heart, and did not condemn her.

But what language shall we employ to portray the kindness of her beloved father, in this severe affliction? Such are the seasons to prove the depth and permanency of love; and, truly, his well bore the test. No word of censure escaped his lips; but sympathy and tender affection characterized his every action toward her. She afterward felt that she could emphatically apply to him the words of Lord Byron, addressed to his sister:

> "Though thy soul with my grief was acquainted,
> It shrunk not to share it with me;
> And the love which my spirit hath painted
> It never hath found but in thee."

The state of her mind now became one of settled melancholly. The fitful gleams of sunshine which had hitherto gladdened her spirit came no more. All nature seemed to mock her misery. The little birds warbled forth their sweet, joyous songs; the natural sun shone with unclouded splendor; the balmy breezes of Spring fanned her tear-stained cheek; but within

all was dreary, dark and desolate: even her father's tender words of sympathy had no power to comfort her. She now resolved to dedicate the remainder of her life to the service of God: and though so weighed down with grief and anguish, that it seemed almost impossible to engage in forms of devotion—she daily observed seasons of secret prayer, regardless of her feelings.

Would that all Christians adopted a similar plan, instead of being governed wholly (as many are) by impulse, in the performance of spiritual duties. Some think it mockery to go through with a form of prayer, if their feelings do not correspond with it; but we believe this to be a serious mistake. It is, indeed, mockery, to ask God, formally, for things not desired; but one is not always accountable for feelings. Circumstances, to a great extent, affect these; and we have the comforting assurance, that "He knoweth our frame—He remembereth we are but dust." If the aspirations of the soul be towards God, the absence of emotion should not prevent giving utterance to such aspirations in words of prayer. Much of success in spiritual, as well as temporal things, depends on correct habits. Hence the necessity of observing regularly, each day, seasons of secret devotion.

Mary found this a great help in bringing her nearer to her Saviour. But in spite of her persistent efforts to solace herself with the consolations of grace, and turn her heart toward her Maker, it was for a long

time impossible to disengage her thoughts from one she had loved so long. The memory of him was associated with every thing; and there was no circumstance connected with those associations, but served to aggravate her sorrow. She had once supposed a widow's condition the most wretched on earth; but now it seemed to her that widowhood would be sweet compared with her present miserable state. Nightly, as she laid her head upon her pillow, she felt that, had she satisfactory evidence of her preparation for death, she would gladly close her eyes, to open them no more on earth. In tales of romance hearts break and heroines die; but it is not always thus in real life. Though the heart may be broken, earthly existence is often prolonged. Yet short-sighted, selfish humanity realizes not that GOD has a wise design in this.

Opposite Mr. Milton lived a family (belonging to the Society of Friends) by the name of Jones. Mr. J. and his wife were both preachers. She had often expressed to Mary her disapprobation of concerts, saying she believed the LORD had a higher mission for her. Mary informed her of the great blessing she had received in reading that memorable chapter; on which Mrs. J. immediately interpreted some parts she had not understood, as meaning spiritual children which the LORD would give her. This, however, made no impression on Mary's mind at that time, as she could not imagine it possible that she could be the means of doing any good.

One beautiful evening her father invited her to a walk; on which occasion he talked to her in the most comforting manner. He referred to his experience after her dear mother's death—saying he felt at that time, (as she probably now did) that he could never again be happy: but GOD designed that all His creatures should enjoy life; and time gradually healed his wounded spirit, as it would hers. And thus it proved; though months and even years passed, before she fully recovered her natural cheerfulness.

The following verses, which close this chapter, were composed in October, 1861, four months after parting with Clayton. When she first fully realized that the ties that bound her to him were severed, her emotions were those of mingled surprise and regret, that she should have left him. But as the bitterness of her grief began to wear away, she felt a sweet sense of freedom, and was truly grateful to her Heavenly Father that the fearful snare had been broken. She received several letters from him soon after they parted, and was desirous to maintain friendly correspondence; which, however, her father decidedly opposed, and, at his earnest request, she wrote him a farewell letter, which put an end to their communication.

REMINISCENCES.

How dear to my heart are the scenes of the past,
And the memory of pleasures too brilliant to last;
How painfully sweet to recall the blest hours
When my path—now so dreary—was blooming with flowers!

O! pleasure once gladdened my now darkened sky;
No storm-cloud appeared, and no sorrow was nigh;
For a dearly beloved one was then by my side;
And sweetest enjoyment his presence supplied.

My desolate heart is now pining alone;
My sadness uncheered by affection's sweet tone:
I have parted in sorrow from him whom I love;
And I'm lonely and sad wherever I rove.

O! car time of that hour the mem'ry efface,
When with fast-flowing tears and a long, last embrace,
I bade him adieu whom my idol had been?
O! 'twas Summer without—but 'twas Winter within!

We parted—methought I could never again
Know aught but despondency, sadness and pain.
How slow passed the hours!—as day after day
In sorrow and loneliness wasted away.

The Summer is gone, and the Autumn is here
With its bleak, chilling winds—its leaves witherad and sear;
But the change of the seasons, where'er I may be,
Brings no promise or hope of re-union with thee.

The widow may weep o'er her loved one's lone tomb,
And in sorrow and anguish bewail her sad doom;
But more dark than the widow's my lot must be—
My loved one still lives—but lives not for me.

O! where art thou now?—is some loving friend near
Thy pleasures to share and thy sorrows to cheer?
Wherever thou art, and whatever thy lot—
In joy, or in sadness—O! am I forgot?

O! can I believe thou art wholly untrue?
—That naught of affection thy heart ever knew?
O! can I believe that no memories of me—
No sweet thoughts of the past still linger with thee?

O! cruel surmisings! I cannot believe!—
A thought so unwelcome I ne'er can receive:
Though thou may'st not love me thou canst not forget:
In friendship my mem'ry must dwell with thee yet.

How often when lonely and sighing for thee,
And the dear by-gone hours, so precious to me;
I ask my sad heart—alas! all in vain—
Have we parted forever? shall we ne'er meet again?

And, if we should meet—the time and the place?—
With the coldness of strangers? or love's fond embrace?
Shall I greet thee with calmness, or with wild throbbing heart?
Will thy presence give pleasure, or sorrow impart?

Shall we meet by appointment, or by a surprise?
Be free from restraint, or our feelings disguise?
Will the meeting be joyous, or poignant with grief?
The parting be painful, or bring sweet relief?

Alas! vain inquiries—known only to Thee,
Our Almighty Father, the future can be—
Whatever awaits us—whether pleasure or pain—
We ask for Thy aid, and we ask not in vain.

For Thou wilt be near us, whatever betide;
If we do but trust Thee to guard and to guide—
To keep us near Thee in prosperity's hour,
And deliver our souls from adversity's power.

O! watch o'er my loved one, where'er he may be;
Guide safely his bark o'er life's troubled sea:
Erase every dark stain of sin from his heart,
And grant him that peace Thou alone canst impart,

And bring us at length, when time is no more,
To that haven of rest, the bright heavenly shore
Where sorrow and sighing and anguish shall cease,
And our tempest-tost souls be forever at peace.

CHAPTER VIII.

NEW EMPLOYMENT, AND A NEW HOME.

WHILE absent from home on one of her concerting tours, Mary commenced arranging a little work entitled "Eva Graves, or the Triumphs of Faith", having then, however, no definite purpose in regard to its publication. She merely made a beginning at that time; but as she slowly recovered from the effects of her severe affliction, she longed again for employment. After a consultation with her father, she concluded to finish her story, add thereto some of her poems not yet in print, and prepare a little volume for publication. This they hoped might be a pecuniary benefit to her, as well as afford healthful occupation for her mind. During the Summer she completed the arrangement of her book, which she dictated for her father to write. Having a little means saved from her former earnings, she invested it in publishing the same, and decided to travel with it during the ensuing Winter. In order to do this it was necessary that she should have a companion. Neighbor to her father lived a Mr. B——,

who had a large family of daughters. They were quite poor, and the girls were obliged to support themselves, as soon as old enough to do so. Mary called on this family for the purpose of securing the services of one of them in this capacity. One of the youngest, named Inez, was selected. Being rather delicate in health her parents thought traveling might be a benefit to her. She was about seventeen years of age, quite diffident, and unaccustomed to society. They required Mary to pay her no wages, except to defray her expenses. This she considered very favorable, though she had some misgivings about taking her; thinking that, perhaps, one who was older, and had mingled more with the world, would serve her better. She concluded, however, to abide by their decision, and, in October, 1861, accompanied by her young attendant, she once more left her beloved parents and their comfortable, quiet home, and entered upon a new phase of public life, unprotected by human arm, and with the whole care of her business resting on herself. They journeyed from place to place by public conveyance, and traveled from house to house on foot, selling her books. Their first destination was the city of Belfast, Me., some fifteen miles from her father's residence. They arrived there late at night, and finding lodgings at the hotel all occupied, were obliged to rest as best they could, without a bed. The next morning they set out on their new business; but having slept little the previous

night, and being strangers in a strange city, they were not in the best spirits; and, perhaps, partly on this account, had not the best of success. Indeed they met with but little encouragement in that place, and therefore remained there but a few days. Mary thought she might do better in villages than in cities, and it so proved.

She afterward found quite a ready sale for her book, and received expressions of sympathy and kind feeling from the people, wherever she went. On leaving home she resolved to erect a family altar, which resolution she faithfully kept. Morning and evening, seated alone in their own quiet room, Inez would read a chapter from the Bible, after which Mary would offer fervent prayer and praise to her Heavenly Father.

These were often seasons of sweet enjoyment to Mary, and we hope were not wholly lost upon Inez, though she was not herself a Christian. She was one of that class of persons whose dispositions lead them to extremes—one day exceeding lively and social, and the next equally depressed and reserved—speaking not at all unless she was spoken to. She proved, however, a faithful servant and kind friend to Mary—looking carefully after her interest, to the best of her ability; and they became strongly attached to each other.

Mary was not really calculated for this business, and did not heartily enjoy it; though, like most

other employments, it had its advantages Constant exercise in the open air was conducive to health ; and having the evenings wholly to herself she was spared the evil of late hours, which had so worn upon her in the past. She was rugged and hearty during the whole season, as was also her companion, whose health rapidly improved by traveling.

The Winter was very severe, and they were often obliged to remain in-doors for days, in consequence of drifting storms. This frequently brought them into straitened circumstances, in which case Mary was greatly comforted in casting her care on her blessed Saviour, and was strong in faith that all their wants would be supplied, though her friend was sometimes quite anxious and uneasy as to how their expenses would be met.

The reader may find them at this time in the State of New-Hampshire, some two hundred miles from home, with means limited to less than one dollar. In this destitute condition they arrived at the town of Lyme, intending there to give a concert. Their perplexity was greatly increased to find that the celebrated Barker family were there, holding a series of musical entertainments, the last of which was to be given that evening. Spring was approaching, and the roads becoming very wet, rendering it almost impossible to circulate her books, and therefore she had been obliged, several times of late, to resort to this expedient to defray daily expenses. Now, however, Mary was

quite at a loss what course to pursue, but resolved to make the best of her unpleasant situation, and wait the openings of a kind Providence.

After dinner they repaired to the parlor, where they found Mr. Barker seated at the piano. He recognized Mary at once, having seen her a short time previous at one of his concerts, and learned that she was engaged in similar business. Introducing himself, he immediately entered into friendly conversation—inquiring whether she designed giving an entertainment in that place. She replied that such was her intention when she came; but she supposed the good people of L. were by this time satiated with music, and therefore thought best to give up the idea. He advised her, however, not to do so—kindly offering to do all in his power to assist her. He expressed a desire to hear her sing, and she complied. He seemed highly pleased with her voice, talent, &c., and proposed that she should go to the town hall that evening, and sing the same song—saying that if she would do so, and perform it as well as she then had done, he would announce her concert, and use his influence to induce the people to patronize her. This was on Saturday, and her entertainment was planned for the ensuing Monday evening, which arrangement would prolong her stay at the hotel three days. With her limited means this seemed at first appalling; but as she could devise no other plan, she concluded to act on his suggestion. She accordingly sung her song as

he had proposed, and he performed his part of the contract, cordially recommending her to the sympathy and patronage of the public.

His kind, friendly manner greatly cheered and comforted her, and she felt very hopeful of success. She made the affair continually a subject of earnest prayer, and her strong confidence in her Heavenly Father's care for her and all her interests, saved her from anxiety in regard to it, though Inez was quite fearful of the result. The reader may judge of their feelings, when, on arriving at the hall, at the time appointed, they found all dark and still, as if no entertainment had been expected. They returned to the hotel, where they learned that a few gentlemen had assembled, purposing to attend the concert. She sung to them in the parlor; but the sum she received was a mere trifle—only a small beginning towards paying their bills. She was now, as the Apostle says, "Cast down, but not destroyed"—strongly confident that, dreary as was the prospect, some way of escape would yet be made.

Mr. Barker gave a concert in another place that evening; but his wife being indisposed, and unable to accompany them, they returned to Lyme that night. Mrs. B— expressed deep sympathy for Mary, and informed her husband of her ill success. The next morning in company with the landlord, he went out in quest of aid for her. The result of their efforts was the receipt of a sum sufficient to meet all demands at the

hotel, and a surplus of five dollars. Thus her Heavenly Father, in whom she so implicitly trusted, did not disappoint her, nor will He any who fully cast their care upon Him. Yet how natural to walk by sight, rather than by faith; and how many rich blessings and precious proofs of His love are lost on this account! Were that blessed Parent, who ceaselessly watches over the destinies of His children, visible to the outward sense, how gladly would the weary, care-worn one rest on Him, as the child reposes on its mother's bosom. But because unseen, God is forgotten, and unregenerate nature chooses to rely on self, rather than on its Maker. But when grace has conquered "the evil heart of unbelief", and imparted the simple art of living by faith, joy and peace inexpressible take the place of care and anxiety, and the soul is filled with love and praise, as was Mary's, for this wonderful deliverance.

Their next destination was the town of Lebanon, N, H., where her parents had formerly resided, though at a period previous to her remembrance; indeed the fact of their having lived there had passed from her mind. She now determined to make concerting her business to meet the expenses of her journey home—which she intended to accomplish as soon as possible. She accordingly advertised for an entertainment at Lebanon, on the following evening, which was Saturday. It was stormy, however, and but few were present. At the request of some of her audience, she repeated the concert on the following Monday evening, with but lit-

tle better success. The next morning while she and Inez were in their room busily engaged in preparations for their departure at noon, a rap was heard at the door. On opening it, the landlord's daughter presented herself, stating that a gentleman was waiting in the parlor to see Mary. He proved to be one of her mother's intimate friends, who was present on the previous evening, and had come at his wife's earnest request, to ascertain whether she were really, as they supposed, the daughter of her former friend, and if so, to insist on a visit. To this, however, Mary at first felt strongly disinclined. the roads were daily becoming worse, on which account she felt it necessary to hasten home, and had made her plans accordingly: but God's ways are not our ways. As Mr. Hutchins continued to urge his wife's request, her feelings suddenly changed, and she consented to accompany him home; intending however, only a brief call. Mrs. H— was highly intelligent, social and agreeable: she received Mary with great cordiality, and insisted that she should not leave town that day—informing her that there were some relatives, and many acquaintances of her mother, who would be sadly disappointed not to see her; and besides she thought a little rest would do her no harm. She kindly offered to send word to the friend, who, she was sure, would meet her there, and take her to their homes, for a visit. After some deliberation, Mary concluded to tarry until the next day at least: she therefore went back to the hotel—settled

her business there, and then, with Inez, returned to the residence of Mr. Hutchins. The acquaintance proved a most pleasant one to all parties ; and they remained there several days. Mrs. H—expresssed a desire that M. might have a home in Lebanon ; to which she replied that, if she could get a class in music, her wish might be gratified. Her friend, however, gave her no encouragement to expect this, as there were already several teachers in the village.

In a few days one Mr. Loomer, whose wife was her mother's most intimate friend in their girlhood, called to see her, and took them to his own residence, some four miles distant. He was a farmer, as were also most of his neighbors. The family consisted of himself wife and one son—all quiet, pleasant people. Their home was retired, and every thing around seemed to invite to rest, which Mary sadly needed.

Relief from the care and perplexity of business, and the fatigue of traveling, was indeed refreshing to body and mind; and in the enjoyment of the society and sympathy of their kind friends, all her toils and anxieties were dismissed ; and, comparatively forgetful of the past, and, regardless of the future, she gave herself up to the happy influence of present surroundings.

They visited, at this time, another family in the same neighborhood, by the name of Walker. Mrs. W. was a cousin to her mother. This was also a very pleasant family, and the interview a delightful one to

all. Mr. Loomer kindly interested himself in procuring scholars for her. We here insert another of her father's letters, written about this time.

MY DEAR, DEAR MATIE:

Thine of March 3d was duly received, but being quite busy, I have neglected to answer till now. Thou canst not know, my dear child, the satisfaction thy letter afforded me. Has not our Heavenly Father kindly answered our prayers, and kept thee from evil, and raised up kind friends, and spoken peace to thy troubled heart. How it does poor father's heart good to hear so good tidings from his poor daughter: may she be enabled to bless the great GOD for his great goodness. How pleasant it seems to hear from those dear friends that thy sainted mother loved so well. May the richest blessings be theirs for thus showing favor to my poor dear daughter. I rejoice in thy joy, my dear Matie I blame thee not, in "throwing off all thought for the future, and living in the happy present." May the experience of the goodness of our Heavenly Father lead thee and me to trust in Him more and more, and strive to obey all His commandments.

My love and kindest wishes to all those dear friends. It would give me much satisfaction to hear from them. We are still favored with health and many comforts, for which may we be truly grateful. Is there any snow in the Granite State? We have some yet, between three and four feet, very solid. We rec'd a letter

from dear Lissa, dated March 16. They were well—think of returning to Vernon, Vt., or vicinity. Our friends and neighbors are well. D. Richards, the driver between Belfast and Rockland, passed the other day, and inquired for thee with much interest; sent his respects, &c. It is getting late, and I must leave thee for the present, wishing thee all that success and prosperity that is best.

As ever,

FATHER.

Near to Mr. L. lived a gentleman named Hamilton, who had a daughter about twelve years of age—an only child. Her parents were very desirous she should become a player, and had bought her a piano only a few months before: she had taken lessons at the village during the winter, but had made little progress. On hearing of Mary, Mr. H. thought it might be an advantage to take her into his family, not only as a teacher, but as a boarder, that his daughter's musical training might be under her constant supervision. He therefore waited on her, to see what arrangements could be made. The interview was concluded with an engagement on his part to come for her the next week, provided the teacher they were then employing was willing to relinquish her claim. There were also three others, whose parents agreed to place their daughters under her instruction—Mr. Walker among the rest. This seemed a favorable opening, and was just such a situation as Mary had desired; yet several

years had passed since she had been engaged in teaching, and it seemed almost like new business. Besides, the family in which she was to reside were entire strangers, and the feeling of dread and misgivings, so natural to her when undertaking any new enterprise, for a time cast a shadow over her mind. The next week she bade a sorrowful adieu to her faithful Inez, who was now to return to her own home. During all those months, nothing had transpired to mar their friendship; and the parting was sad to them both. Mr. Hamilton came for M. at the time appointed, and she was duly installed in her new home. Once there all unpleasant feelings vanished. Mrs. H. gave her a cordial welcome, and set her at once quite at her ease.

The next day she entered upon her duties as teacher. Her first care was to combine, as far as possible, amusement with instruction; and thereby awaken in her pupils an interest in their lessons. She therefore released Miss Ella from her tedious instruction book, obliging her to practise only such exercises as were absolutely necessary; giving her, instead, simple pieces. This plan worked admirably, and Ella soon became deeply interested in her music, and progressed with a rapidity that greatly astonished and pleased her parents, and increased the interest they already felt in Mary. She was equally successful with her other scholars, and won many friends. The time now passed very pleasantly. Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton were exceedingly kind, planning for her welfare

with almost parental care. She found in them all she could desire, save Christian fellowship and sympathy. Living at some distance from the village, she was also necessarily deprived of many religious privileges; but her Heavenly Father had endowed her with a wonderful faculty of adapting herself to her circumstances, which enabled her to pass over the unpleasant things of life more easily than she otherwise would have done. Notwithstanding being deprived of these privileges, she found her present surroundings, in some respects, more conducive to growth in grace than those of the past.

As the love of GOD increased in her heart, she felt a desire for a spiritual home. She had long since concluded that, should she unite with any church, it would be the Methodist. There was one of that order in Lebanon; and being now free from the confusion of itinerant life, and quietly settled in her new home, she decided to join them if they would accept her. She made known her purpose to her friend, Mrs Loomer, who was a member of the same church. Mrs. L. conversed with the pastor in regard to it, and introduced Mary to him. Soon after she was received into the class, and in due time, into the church, in full connection.

While associated with the society of Friends, she had somewhat imbibed their principles, and therefore, perhaps, did not attach so much importance to outward ceremonies as most Christians; yet the day

on which she publicly took the vows of GOD upon her was a very solemn and interesting one—she performed those duties with great earnestness and sincerity; but though so pleasantly situated, Mary's life was not all sunshine. Remembrances of the unhappy past, and those strong yearnings for companionship and sympathy, so natural to her, often filled her heart with sadness, and rendered her sky dark and cloudy. The following original poems, composed about this time, will convey to the reader an idea of the strength of these feelings, and the tenacity with which her affection still clung, (notwithstanding all that was past), to her beloved one.

ALONE.

Alone! O, who can speak the bitter anguish—
The depth of wo that little word imparts?
How many weary spirits pine and languish
For lack of kindred, sympathizing hearts!
Alone! It is my soul's most sore affliction;
It haunts me still—wherever I may be—
That in this world the flowers of pure affection
Can never live, can never bloom for me.

Alone—in every hour of joy or sadness,
Where'er on earth my changeful lot be cast;
Heightening my griefs—diminishing my gladness—
It dims the present and o'erclouds the past.
Alone! where'er my weary steps may wander,
I'm still uncheered by sweet affection's tone:
In pensive musings, oft, I sadly ponder;
Forever sighing that I am ALONE.

And yet I'm not alone; because the Father,
The Great Almighty One, is still my friend:
O! then, when storms of sorrow darkly gather—
When clouds of anguish wildly o'er me bend—
Be this my joy, my hope, my consolation,
Eternal One—that Thou art still my own:
In each dark hour of woe and tribulation,
O let me feel that I am not ALONE.

Still point my aching heart to that blest haven
Where sighing, sin and sorrow cannot come:
O! I would ever live in hope of heaven
Till Thou, at last, shalt kindly call me home.
Then, on the wings of faith and love ascending,
I'll gain that realm where trials are unknown;
There shall these constant yearnings have an ending;
Then shall I cease to sigh because ALONE.

I THINK OF THEE YET.

I think of thee yet. Like the perfume of flowers
That are trampled in dust, are my mem'ries of thee;
They come o'er me, stealing—in solitude's hours,
Bringing back, once again, thy dear image to me.
Yes, though I am left, now, all sorrowing and lonely,
I think of thee, ever, with saddest regret;
My heart is still true to thee, true to thee only;
I cannot forget thee—I THINK OF THEE YET.

Ah! once I was blessed when thy loved form was near me;
Yes; then I was blessed in believing thee mine:
Thy voice had a power, in all sorrow, to cheer me;
My heart, with its warmest affection, was thine.
O! the fearful awaking from that blissful dreaming!
Can my heart e'er the pangs of its anguish forget?
Though no bright star of love o'er my path is now beaming—
Though forsaken by thee, still I THINK OF THEE YET.

I think of thee yet. Yes, kindly as ever—
The affection I gave to thee knows no decay;
Still faithful and true, I'd depart from thee never,
But walk by thy side through life's devious way.
But I know thou'rt not true, and, no longer confiding,
My poor broken heart would gladly forget;
But the memories of thee are ever abiding—
Still fondly, though sadly, I THINK OF THEE YET.

I think of thee yet—thy memory still cherish—
O how couldst thou wound thus this fond, loving heart,
Whose affection for thee will not wither nor perish,
Though cruelly pierced by treachery's dart?
They tell me 'tis foolish thus fondly to love thee—
That thou art unworthy, and I must forget.
'Tis vain! from my heart I cannot remove thee:
Though wronged and deserted, I THINK OF THEE YET.

CHAPTER IX.

A REMARKABLE EXPERIENCE.

SINCE being reclaimed from her fearful backslidings, Mary had hitherto been measurably satisfied with her spiritual state. True, she was aware she was not already perfect. The ease and frequency with which the inherent evils in her nature overcame and brought her into condemnation afforded sad proof of this fact. But it was her constant aim to live the life of a Christian, and the idea of being free from these troublesome enemies in this life, had never yet crossed her mind. When present at social meetings she was quite active, and the members of her church entertained an exalted opinion of her spirituality—so much so that a sister once asked her if she did not enjoy the blessing of entire sanctification. She always shrunk from being thought better than she really was, and therefore replied promptly and emphatically in the negative. Her knowledge of the doctrine of Christian holiness, whether as taught by the Sacred Scriptures or the church of her choice, was very limited. Her attention had never been especially

called to the subject; nor had she given it more than passing thought. Her ideas relative to it were, that such a state might be attainable by a certain favored few; but if so, the work must be very gradually accomplished by laying aside one sin after another, until the heart was thus purified.

In the year 1862 she visited her beloved sister, whom she had not met for a number of years. The visit, though short, was very pleasant and profitable. During this interview she became convinced that her sister enjoyed a higher degree of spiritual attainment than she had yet reached, and this conviction stimulated her to renewed exertion for more rapid advancement. After returning to her home she became painfully conscious that she needed more of GOD'S conquering grace in her heart. This feeling she describes as hungering and thirsting after righteousness. She was naturally very timid and fearful in times of real or supposed danger, and the HOLY SPIRIT had of late been impressing with power upon her mind the words of inspiration, relative to the fearful unbelieving, &c.; (Rev. xxi. 8.) leading her to feel that such a state was incompatible with true faith in GOD, and that there must be a possibility of rising above it—though how this could be accomplished she did not yet understand. Her hasty temper, also, often afforded cause for mourning and deep self-abasement; but notwithstanding her repeated efforts to overcome these evils, she was powerless to do so. Her first act, on

becoming sensible of her need was to make a more definite and thorough consecration of herself to her Saviour than ever before; praying and agonizing for deeper manifestations of His love to her soul. But the more she prayed and struggled, the more wretched and unsatisfied she became. She now nightly reviewed each day with sad regret—being painfully conscious of having lived beneath her privilege, in spite of her earnest endeavors to do right, and experiencing a feeling akin to condemnation, even when not aware of having committed real sin.

A camp-meeting was to be held at Lebanon in September of the same year, at which Mary felt a strong desire to be present. She had attended one day the year previous, which was the extent of her experience in camp-meetings. But, for some unknown cause, she now felt specially drawn in that direction. An idea once suggested itself to her mind, that perhaps it was the blessing of sanctification she was seeking, and if so, might receive it at camp-meeting, as she had been informed that others had done. This, however, was but a momentary thought, and was soon forgotten—nor was she aware of being influenced by it in the least, in her earnest wish to attend the meeting. Being somewhat indisposed in consequence of a severe cold, the gratification of her desire appeared impracticable: on which account some of her friends endeavored to dissuade her from her purpose. But it seemed that she could not be denied the privilege of

being there. She therefore concluded to make the trial, and tarry as long as her health would admit.

The time appointed found her at the consecrated place—it seemed, indeed, to her like holy ground, and she entered heartily at once into the spirit of the meeting. During all these weeks, while seeking the deeper work of grace, she had enjoyed a clear witness of acceptance with GOD, and still felt a degree of peace and joy; yet the all-absorbing emotions of her soul were earnest, restless longing for more of His love, which continued to increase as the meeting progressed.

One evening she was seated alone in her tent, weary and exhausted. She had now been on the encampment two days, and the novelty of her surroundings, together with her active exercises and deep emotions, had somewhat overtaxed her nervous system—already weakened by the impaired state of her health—and she resolved to leave the ground the next morning. Services were being held in other tents, but none at the time in the one she occupied; and as she sat there, thus fatigued in body and mind, the confusion annoyed her, and she mentally soliloquised thus:

"Well, I am now a member of the M. E. church, and am supposed to endorse all her doctrines and usages; yet I cannot go with them fully. I wonder why they can't be more quiet." A comfortable night's rest, however, composed her disquieted nerves, and she awoke next morning, feeling quite refreshed,

and at once abandoned the idea of leaving the ground that day.

She had some conversation with some of her tent's company concerning her present state of feeling. They informed her that one brother Nichols, a Congregationalist preacher, was at the meeting, whose whole theme was holiness—that it was this she was seeking, and they thought she might be benefitted by hearing him converse on the subject. In regard to this, however, she was quite indifferent, as she could not believe it possible for such a work instantaneously to be wrought; and, yielding to the influence of a momentary temptation, she replied to their suggestions: "O yes, they will come here and profess to receive that blessing, and then go home and lose it all: I want no such sanctification as that." On a previous eve the sister who had once questioned her in relation to her spiritual attainments, testified publicly in her hearing, that she believed the LORD had sanctified her wholly. Ah! thought Mary, I don't know about that. I wish I knew how you felt, and how you became aware of this fact. She greatly desired an interview with her, but no opportunity was afforded. Then the thought was suggested that, perhaps, she, too, enjoyed this blessing, but was unconscious of it. This, however, she instantly repelled as being impossible.

The tent's company was soon assembled for a prayer-meeting, in which Mary was deeply interested

as heretofore, though the same conflicting emotions of joy and unrest still continued to agitate her bosom. During a momentary pause in the exercises, the pastor requested her to pray. Her feelings responded to the request, and she instantly fell upon her knees—forgetful of all things, save her own immediate, pressing need. Her agonized soul found vent in language as follows: "Lord, what doth hinder Thee from manifesting Thyself to me more fully? Have I not consecrated my all to Thee? I do now and here make a new, solemn and unreserved surrender of all I have and am—soul, body and spirit, for time and eternity, and call upon Heaven to witness my sincerity." As she uttered these words a strange weakness came over her physical frame, and at the same time a superhuman power seemed to take full possession of her internal being, inspiring and controlling every word and act. She became unconscious of every thing around her, though fully sensible of all she said and did. Such an overwhelming sense of GOD'S love and presence was vouchsafed to her, that she was led exultingly to exclaim, "Bless the Lord, O! my soul;" and the words baptism of the HOLY GHOST were again and again impressed upon her mind, as expressive of this wonderful manifestation. She arose from that prayer, in a sense she had never before experienced, a new creature. Her Heavenly Father had condescended to teach her, as man never could have done, that His power to save depends not on the lapse of months

or years, or the struggles of His creatures; but that "now is the accepted time"; and that it is His grace that saves. The conviction forced itself upon her that if such a state as entire sanctification were attainable, it must be she then enjoyed it; for surely she had something she never before possessed. She seated herself in the tent at the close of the meeting, lost in wonder, love and praise, in view of the great blessing she had just received; such peace—such intimate nearness, too, and communion with her GOD, as she then felt, must be experienced, in order to be understood—language cannot describe it. What had become of all her fears? They were cast out by perfect love. Hitherto she could never think of death with any degree of composure; but now the thought of this, or any thing else that had formerly alarmed her, could not disturb her calm, firm repose in her blessed Saviour.

She took her seat in the congregation at the time appointed for preaching; but so completely absorbed was she in her own happy reflections, and the sweet feast of GOD'S love in her soul, that she heard but very little of the sermon. She left the hallowed ground, rich in heavenly treasure; yet feeling somewhat like a little child just trying to walk, careful at every step lest she might fall.

Her cousin, Mrs. Walker, with whom she spent a day at the camp-meeting the previous year, expected she would return, as she then had done, weary and

fretful ; and was, therefore, greatly surprised on meeting her, to find her perfectly restored to health, both in body and mind. Mrs. W. was not a professed Christian, but was very observing concerning the life and spirit of those who were such. She was deeply interested in the account of Mary's experience, and ever after closely watched all her actions. Close scrutiny, however, was not necessary, in order to discover the change which had taken place in her. She had often queried with herself in former years, why it was so unnatural for her to converse on spiritual things. She always inclined to talk enthusiastically of earthly friends whom she loved—why not the same of JESUS ? These questions she was unable to answer satisfactorily at the time ; but now the mystery was solved. JESUS once said "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" ; and she found it even so. CHRIST and His salvation were now her dearest themes. Light, trifling conversations were no longer indulged ; impatience and irritability of temper, which had so long and so easily overcome her, gave place to a quiet, unruffled frame of mind, and mildness of outward deportment : and though by no means free from temptations, yet these were now resisted with comparative ease.

But the brightest days are often immediately succeeded by dark and cloudy ones. Our Saviour, after the wonderful manifestation at his baptism, was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted ; and

His followers, after receiving a great blessing, sometimes share a similar experience. Such was the case with Mary, who, about this time, passed through a severe trial, which, however, did not overcome her.

A blind musician visited Lebanon for the purpose of giving a concert; and some friends of Mrs. Hamilton, residing in the village, invited him and M. to spend the afternoon with them, thinking an acquaintance might be pleasant, as both were suffering from the same infirmity. The time passed very agreeably, the gentleman from the first, manifesting a deep interest in Mary. He was rather intelligent and social, but very eccentric in disposition and manners. Before they seperated, Mrs. H. invited him to visit M. at her residence; which invitation he accepted.

While there he informed her of his engagement with a certain young lady; but expressed a decided preference for her, and a strong desire to make her his wife, could this engagement be broken. He possessed an extremely sensitive nature, which was often severely wounded in his intercourse with the public. He talked freely of his trials to Mary, exciting her deepest sympathy; but he was not a Christian, and the sacredness of her late consecration to GOD withheld her from allowing her feelings full scope: though the query would arise in her mind—why may I not be permitted to smooth the pathway of this almost friendless one, and even be instrumental in his eternal salvation? To her Saviour she could pour out her soul

without restraint; and although as she did so, a revival of the old, ardent longings of her nature caused the bitter tears to flow, yet there was, instead of her former murmurings, a sweet, though sad acquiescence in the Divine will; a precious confidence inspired in her breast, that her Heavenly Father knew best; and whether these desires were gratified or denied, her highest good would be the design. This new friend left her in a few days, and she never met nor heard directly from him afterward. She felt very sad, for a time, after his departure; but her sadness soon passed away, and she became happy and cheerful as before.

For several weeks after her remarkable experience at the camp-meeting, with the exception of the trial just alluded to, scarcely a cloud darkened her sky.—Her communion with GOD was exceeding sweet and intimate: she seemed to converse with Him as one talks with a friend. So constant and perfect was her freedom from condemnation, that the thought sometimes occurred to her, that her conscience was less tender than formerly; though this she could not admit, and, indeed, soon received abundant proof to the contrary. The quarterly meeting was to be held about this time, at which she expected to be present. She looked forward to the love-feast, on Sunday morning, with joyful anticipations, as she was always greatly blessed in social meetings, and so seldom permitted to enjoy these privileges. She had spent the previous night with a sister in the church, and next morning

after breakfast, as she went up stairs to arrange her bed, she congratulated herself on the wonderfully peaceful state of her mind, during the few past weeks. She proceeded to take the clothes from the bed, and desiring to do so as quickly as possible, thought the shortest way the best; but the clothes being heavy and tightly secured on either side, she did not succeed as readily as she wished; and, giving them a sudden jerk, said, in a peevish tone, come off, here. Three little impatient words, a little impatient spirit, known only to her GOD, yet producing the severest condemnation she had ever experienced. The tempter at once defiantly suggested the question, "Where is your sanctification now?" and her poor heart was ready with the answer: surely, I've lost it! I've lost it! She threw herself upon her knees, and with deep contrition confessed her sin, endeavoring to exercise faith in the LORD JESUS, for pardon and purity: but Satan kept her transgression constantly before her, with the idea that it was of no use for her again to claim the blessing. She strove to resist the temptation, by still looking to her Saviour, but the enjoyment of the love-feast was spoiled for her; and the only testimony she could bring on the occasion was, I thank GOD, if any man sin, we have an advocate with the FATHER. She informed some of the sisters how she had been overcome, and how miserable she was in consequence; but they treated the matter as simply ridiculous—laughing outright at her distress of mind, at

so trivial an occurrence—expressing the opinion that, if she never committed a greater sin than that, she would not be thought worthy of very severe punishment. It seemed very strange to her, that they did not comprehend her feelings ; yet she would not herself have understood a similar experience a short time before. Good heed should always be taken to the Apostle's injunction, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." There is danger, even in the highest state of Christian attainment, of imperceptibly becoming proud and self-sufficient, and our blessed LORD, seeing a soul in this danger, temporarily leaves it to itself, that it may fully realize its entire dependence on His all-sufficient grace. She now began to feel a strong desire to labor for her blessed Master ; but believing her present situation was by Divine appointment, she felt that she ought to be content, and do what she could where she was, until ordered to another field. She felt a very deep interest in the spiritual welfare of her friends, Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton. Mr. H., about this time, was apparently wasting away with consumption : he seemed for a while, quite thoughtful and serious. Mary often conversed with them in regard to their eternal interests, always praying for, and sometimes with them. But skilful medical treatment soon restored him to his usual health ; the world and its concerns again absorbed his attention, and Mary was obliged to wait an answer to her prayers for his salvation.

More than a year had now elapsed since Mary had left her parents, and she began to feel a strong desire to visit them once more. She expressed this wish to her friend, Mrs. H., who, for some cause, then unknown to herself, seemed anxious that she should hasten her departure. Could Mary have seen the future, she too might have felt in haste; but there were some little arrangements to be made before starting, and she decided to wait until they were completed. One evening, when all was ready save packing her trunk, she was seated in the pleasant sitting-room of Mr. H., with the family, talking over her anticipated journey and visit, to be entered on the ensuing week, when a knock was heard at the door. Mr. H. opened it and a gentleman announced a telegram for Mary. She had received a letter from her sister only a few days before, announcing the birth of a little daughter: and when the telegram was mentioned, she imagined it might contain sad tidings from her. Miss G., a sister of Mrs. H. then present, took the message and read it in silence, while Mary waited in almost breathless suspense, to hear its centents. Mrs. H. asked anxiously what it was. Miss G. replied, "It is the saddest news she could hear": when Mary exclaimed in anguish, "O, is it my dear father?" Yes, it was even so; and the announcement, not of illness but of death. None but such as have experienced the loss of near and dear friends, can imagine the state of Mary's mind on hearing this announce-

ment. She at first felt that it must not, could not be so: there must be some mistake. But as the first shock gradually subsided, her emotions were calmed by a sweet submission to the Divine will. She had passed through affliction so much greater, so much deeper, and this bitter cup contained so many sweet drops, that she could hardly call it affliction. Every remembrance of her dear parent was precious and sacred: she had no doubt of his eternal safety and happiness, and felt that it would be but a little while ere, if faithful, she should meet him where death shall be swallowed up in victory. But strange as it may appear to the reader, she felt no desire to attend the funeral, but rather an aversion to doing so. Several causes conspired to produce this state of feeling. A distance of two hundred miles must be traveled in order to reach his residence, and she must start that very night. So overcome was she by the fearful intelligence, that she felt unable to take such a journey—besides, to enter the home where she had spent so many happy hours, with her beloved father, and not to hear his dear voice, and even be denied the mournful satisfaction of looking upon his face, it seemed would well nigh break her heart. But, above all, she had a certain undefinable foreboding of evil which would overtake her should she go, that caused her feelings to recoil at the thought. Therefore, though her friends kindly offered to render her any assistance in their power, she concluded to abandon the idea, and wrote

to her step-mother, desiring full particulars of his death, as soon as possible. In a few days she received the following letter, which will form the close of this chapter..

"Jan. 9th, 1863.

My Dear Child:

I received thy letters Tuesday eve, and now seat myself alone in my lonely home, to try and relate to thee the particulars of the heart-rending scene through which I have been called to pass. Poor child! how I pity thee! and methinks, could there be tears in heaven, they would be shed for thee. Thy dear father's disease was diphtheria. Saturday morning he was well. In the forenoon he rodè to ———, on business. At dinner time, said his head ached,—of which he frequently complained,—but attended to his work in the afternoon as usual. In the evening, said his throat was a little sore; but so slight we thought but little of it. When the mail came he distributed it, and then sat down to read thy letter. Seemed pleased to hear thou wast coming home; said he should be glad to see the dear child; and then burst into tears. I said to him, "what makes dear husband weep?" "I don't know—for some reason it affects me." After retiring, he spoke of his throat's feeling rather worse—thought he had taken cold. I begged of him, if it felt any worse, to speak to me. About 3 o'clock he awoke me, saying, his head and throat pained him badly. I arose imme-

diately and applied the remedies we had at hand, which relieved the pain in the throat, so that he slept some. But the morning found the throat very sore, and a bad headache, which continued to grow worse until Tuesday, when we sent for a skilful physician, at the village, who pronounced it a bad case, but not the worst. On Wednesday evening the throat seemed better; but the disease settled on the lungs.

The labor for breath was distressing beyond any thing I ever witnessed. He sat in his chair most of the time. Thursday morning he could not speak above a whisper, and only a few words at a time; but was calm, and resigned to the will of his Heavenly Father. O, it was comforting to hear his sweet words of hope and trust in the dear Saviour. Said he was not alarmed, let the case turn as it would: he had prayed, for many years, to be prepared for the trying hour of death; and he felt the Almighty arm underneath. His mind was clear to the close—spoke cheerfully, and with extended hand, to all who came in.—About noon he was so exhausted as to be obliged to lie down; and could breathe more easily. About two hours before his death, said he felt comfortable in body and mind: breathed his last about 12 o'clock, apparently without any suffering.

The day before he died he said he should like to write to thee if he felt able; and added, "Give my love to my dear Mary, and tell her I have strong confidence that God will take care of, and preserve her

from all harm." O, dear M., may we trust ourselves in the hands of that Almighty being, who was dear father's support. At times I have been favored (I would say it with reverence and thanksgiving,) to feel some support and consolation: at other seasons, I cannot find words to express the loneliness and anguish I feel: but I hope I shall not murmur. I have been wonderfully carried through the trying scene.— O, my dear child, what a loss we have met with! O that I could see thee, and mingle our tears.

THY POOR AFFLICTED MOTHER.

CHAPTER X.

MORE BEREAVEMENTS, AND PROVIDENTIAL OPENINGS.

MRS. Milton did not long survive her lamented husband. Her naturally gloomy, desponding mind sunk down beneath the weight of her grief, and she seemed to have little relish for society, or any thing pertaining to this world. In September, 1863, she was visited with severe disease, and then, notwithstanding the absence of earthly attractions, was manifest her strong hold on life. She gave strictest attention to the directions of her physician, eagerly partaking of the most nourishing food, having hitherto restricted herself to the most abstemious diet. But, so weakened had her constitution become, that it was impossible for her to rally; and, after a distressing illness of about two months, she followed her beloved companion to the grave.

Like Martha of old, she was naturally careful and troubled about many things—managing domestic affairs with strictest economy. This peculiar trait she exhibited almost to the very last. She made all necessary arrangements for her funeral, giving explicit di-

rections in regard to the most minute particulars.—She enjoyed, during her sickness, comparatively little sense of the Divine presence, her mind, for the most part, being under a cloud: but when, at last, she was enabled to give up her cares, she received more light, and her end was peace. O that all the Marthas understood the art of casting their cares on Him who careth for them! Dear reader, do you belong to that class? If so, let me entreat you earnestly to pray, that GOD would teach you this art: that whether in active life and health, or laid on a sick and dying bed, your mind's sky be not darkened by undue carefulness about worldly things.

Thus suddenly, in less than a year, Mary was deprived of both her parents. She was not permitted to visit her step mother in her last hours. She now felt herself almost alone in the world; her sister only being left to her of her father's family.

We take occasion, here, to introduce the brother to whom slight allusion was made in a former chapter. A more full account of him should have been given earlier in this history: but as it was overlooked—and we believe the reader will be interested in its perusal—we insert it here. He was an only son, and the heart and hopes of his father seemed centered in him. Yet he was a stubborn, wayward child, and often the source of great grief to his parents. His father labored faithfully and persistently with him, both by reproof and correction; yet apparently to no

purpose. He also constantly remembered him at the throne of grace—and O, how faithful is our GOD to answer the prayers of His trusting children ; though not always in the manner they desire. At the early age of seventeen he became the victim of consumption, which soon terminated his earthly career. As his health began to fail, his father's interest for his soul grew intense, and he labored earnestly to point him to CHRIST, by reading, conversation and prayer : but the poor boy would exclaim, "O that I could feel as you do,"—adding that, between himself and GOD there seemed as it were a great, black wall, through which no light could penetrate. One morning, a few days before his death, he came from his room, with a sweet smile illuminating his usually sad, distressed countenance, saying, joyfully, "O, I believe there is a little light!" Hitherto, partly owing to his disease, he had been very irritable, and difficult to please ; but now what a change ! He became patient and quiet as a lamb, and was cheerful and satisfied with whatever was done for him. At one time, while his father stood by his bedside weeping, he said, O father, don't weep for me ; only think how much better that I should go now, than live a life of dissipation and sin. This happy frame of mind continued to the last. A few minutes before the close he exclaimed, while his countenance glowed with heavenly joy. O it grows brighter and brighter ! and thus he fell asleep in JESUS.

O! who would not obtain such an experience, even at the loss of all earthly enjoyment?—but especially when we consider that all real worldly good is secured and enhanced by the possession of that faith which alone can produce such experience. (See Matt. vi. 33.) We believe many young persons are prevented from seeking the Saviour, from the fact that religion is so constantly associated with the idea of death. If teachers and professed Christians would more clearly hold up and exemplify His power to save and happify the soul while in health, and amid the scenes of busy life, it seems to us that many more would be attracted to Him. The following lines were written by Mr. M., soon after the death of his son:

And hast thou gone, forever gone
My boy, from this low vale of tears,
And left thy father, thus alone
To struggle with life's cares and fears?

Shall I not hear that cheerful voice,
Shall I not see that pleasant smile,
That did a father's heart rejoice
That did the cares of life beguile?

Shall I not see thee moving round
More feeble each succeeding day?
Shall I not hear that cough's dread sound
That wasted thy dear life away?

Thy throbbing pulse shall I not feel,
And strive to cool thy fevered brow,
And all thy sore distress to heal,
As o'er thee I did nightly bow?

Thy sad complaint shall I not hear
How darkness circled thee around
And not one ray of light to cheer
Thy soul, or balm to heal its wound?

Shall I not hear the welcome sound,
How light broke in upon the gloom,
And calmed thy fears, thy soul unbound
And chased the darkness of the tomb.

Father, I'm not afraid to die,
Shall I not hear those words once more?
What glorious things beyond the sky,
When all these ills of life are o'er.

No, that glad voice on earth no more
Shall sound; his form I ne'er shall see
His pains, his fears, his griefs are o'er
For death has set his spirit free.

I fain would sing of all the bliss
With which his raptured soul is swelled,
But who can reach a theme like this,
While here below our souls are held?

Glory to Thee, Almighty one!
Glory to Thee, pure Son of God!
For thou art worthy, thou alone,
Thou hast redeemed him with thy blood.

Notwithstanding her apparently lonely situation, Mary was by no means homeless or friendless. Mr. and Mrs. H. gave unmistakable proofs of friendship and sympathy in this time of her bereavement and sorrow, kindly and cordially inviting her to make their home her own, so long as she might feel dispos-

ed to do so, if it were during life. Illness in the family, however, soon after her father's death, compelled her to seek a temporary abode elsewhere. This she readily obtained with the parents of one of her pupils, Mr. and Mrs. P., in whom she found not only kind and sympathizing friends, but also a brother and sister in Christ, who used every means in their power to cheer her in her loneliness.

The ensuing Spring she returned to her former home, which now possessed a new attraction for her, viz. a dear babe. From the very first she felt an earnest desire that this child should be consecrated to GOD, and she made him a special subject of prayer.

In September of the same year another camp-meeting was held at Lebanon, of which Mary eagerly availed herself, with the expectation of receiving a greater blessing than ever before: but was greatly surprised on entering upon the duties of the meeting, to find herself entirely destitute of emotion—feeling little or no freedom in testimony or prayer. The idea was sometimes suggested, that it was useless for her to take any part in social exercises, while in such a frame of mind. But the Holy Spirit would immediately urge that she should serve GOD, regardless of feeling; and, obedient to its promptings, she moved forward as though all within had been sunshine—testifying by simple faith, that the blood of CHRIST cleanseth from all sin. She was at a loss to account for this strange lack of feeling; but there was such a

sweet freedom from condemnation, and such perfect peace, that she could not feel greatly alarmed about it. She concluded that the LORD had temporarily withdrawn His sensible presence from her for a trial of her faith, or that it was the work of Satan to cause her to lose her hold on GOD, and that whichever of these it might be, all was and would be well. This experience continued during the whole course of the meeting, and for several days after; and in looking back upon it she was led to wonder that she was not left to doubt and despond, as many have done under like circumstances.

Dear Christian reader, ever bear in mind that faith stands not in peculiar emotions or frames of feeling, but in the promises of GOD. These are immutable; and so long as you trust them you are safe and secure.

The following winter she again made a visit to her dear sister, which, though in many respects very pleasant, was attended with some peculiar trials. Her sister and husband belonged to a sect called seventh day adventists, whose doctrines were new, and seemed very strange to her. They regarded them, however, as most sacred, and labored zealously and persistently to convince Mary of their truth—reading to and conversing with her almost incessantly on those subjects, and in such a manner as to convey the impression that, though their views were not clear to her mind, they MUST be correct. The idea that, should she fail

to embrace these doctrines she would incur the displeasure of GOD, and wrong her own soul, was to her sensitive conscience productive of great distress and uneasiness; but she had constant recourse to a throne of grace—praying, at times, almost in an agony for light and direction from above. She was strongly tempted to keep silence in their meetings—feeling that their language was so different from her own, that her testimony would seem out of place. Yet she steadfastly resisted all such temptations—testifying on all occasions, as best she could, to the ability of her JESUS to save to the uttermost.

But perhaps the most severe trial was occasioned by the suggestions of her friends, that should she see the light, and embrace those doctrines, she would be obliged to leave her people, for they would surely cast her off. This she felt would be, indeed, a heavy cross—yet here, too, her consecration endured the test, and she determined to do whatever GOD might make known as duty, regardless of sacrifices or consequences.

When we consider the strength of her attachment to the people of her choice, we must acknowledge this as a wonderful conquest of grace: and it is to the glory of GOD, rather than the exaltation of the creature, that we speak of it. She was at this time constrained to adopt some of their usages; but on more mature reflection she felt that she had been actuated in doing so more by excitement than the Spirit of GOD, and therefore discarded them.

Soon after her return to Lebanon her business began to decrease, and she felt that she must seek employment elsewhere. Accordingly, in the Autumn of 1865 she bade a sorrowful adieu to her faithful friends at L., and sought a temporary home with her sister—undecided what course to pursue. Here she was most heartily welcomed and urged to remain; but this she would not consent to do, unless a situation could be obtained in which she could provide for her own support: as she was unwilling, while able to care for herself, to be dependent on any one. Her sister and husband were conscientiously opposed to concerts, and she therefore determined to seek for scholars in music—earnestly praying that the right way might be opened, and GOD'S will be done by her.

Her efforts to obtain pupils proved unsuccessful, and she decided to wait patiently the openings of Providence. A few weeks after this her sister and husband visited a brother of the latter residing in a neighboring town, and at their earnest request Mary accompanied them. On the evening succeeding their arrival, they were invited to call on some neighbors, who, having heard that Mary was a musician, were desirous of hearing her. During the evening she casually alluded to having made public singing her business, when the whole company began to importune her to give a concert in that place; but she positively refused—supposing her friends would be opposed to it—excusing herself as best she could, with-

out divulging the principal cause of her refusal. To her surprise, however, they cheerfully volunteered to prolong their stay, in order to afford time for the concert, and to render any assistance in their power.

Other objections were removed as fast as raised, and Mary could but regard this as a providential opening. Arrangements were accordingly made, and the enterprise proved a decided success, far exceeding her expectations. By means of the above trifling incidents an unexpected train of circumstances was produced, which resulted in her taking a tour occupying about three months, which she accomplished, for the most part, alone—being dependent on strangers for assistance, but was signally blest with friends and success.

From the time of her entire consecration to GOD, she never gave an entertainment without leaving her testimony on the LORD'S side; beseeching her patrons to seek her Saviour, whose love afforded her so much enjoyment. Her earnest words often introduced her to Christians in her audience, who invited her to visit and attend meetings with them.

It was in this way and on this tour that she first became acquainted with those who could testify like herself, by happy experience, that JESUS CHRIST not only "hath power on earth to forgive sins," but to cleanse from all unrighteousness. She had almost come to consider her own case as an isolated one, and was therefore greatly cheered and confirmed by meeting others of "like precious faith." She eagerly im-

proved every opportunity of laboring for her Master, privately as well as publicly, and was at this time graciously favored with some proofs that her labor was not in vain in the LORD. One instance of this we will relate:

While in the town of W——, she was visited by the pastor of the M. E. church, through whom she was introduced to some sisters, who invited her to tarry with them. She remained several days, and attended their meetings. On one of these occasions a brother stated that a short time before, he awakened himself out of sleep by uttering the words, "none but holy ones can enter," &c. The query immediately forced itself upon his mind, am I holy? This he was obliged to answer in the negative; and since that time had been unable to rest in his present condition. At the close of the meeting he invited Mary to his home. The next morning conversation substantially as follows took place between them. M. had been urging upon him the importance of seeking to be wholly sanctified to GOD—when he replied: "O, I have a hasty, irritable temper, which I seem powerless to overcome. I have been strongly inclined to request that my name should be removed from the church record on account of my inconsistency in this respect. I am constantly crying to GOD for a clean heart; yet apparently growing worse and worse." As he said this he took down his watch which hung near, and commenced winding it. Mary's quick ear

detected the movement, and the Spirit seemed to bring to her mind an illustration to the point,—and she said: Suppose your watch needs cleaning, and consequently refuses to perform its work. You take it to the smith, informing him of the difficulty, and requesting him to set it in order. He assures you of his willingness to do so, but instead of giving it up to him, you retain it in your own hands; vainly endeavoring to set it in motion, still entreating him to do the work. Would you think a sane person would pursue such a course? yet this, to my mind, affords an exact illustration of your present position. Now, if you will cease struggling to make yourself better, and give your heart, just as it is, to your SAVIOUR, trusting in Him, not only to forgive your sins, but to cleanse and save you completely, the work will be done: but never until you do so. Mr. W, was silent: the subject was presented to him in a new light, and grace enabled him to profit by it.

Mary was greatly burdened in secret prayer for him during the day and remarked to his wife that she believed her husband could soon receive the blessing of perfect love. Mrs. W., however, was skeptical in regard to the doctrine, and consequently regarded the matter with incredulity and indifference: but Mary's faith did not waver.

In the evening Mr. W., took up a hymn book, and after reading a hymn which breathed a prayer for holiness, he exclaimed with emphasis, O that is just

what I want. M. replied and it is just what you may have, even now. When the time arrived for family devotion he desired that she should lead in the exercises. At her request he read the sixth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, on which she made some comments, and then proposed to join him in prayer. He seemed greatly humbled before GOD; and his petition evinced that broken, contrite spirit, which the LORD will not despise. He made an earnest consecration of himself and his all to CHRIST, endeavoring by faith to lay hold on His promises. Mary felt that the work was going on gloriously, and resolved to pray that he might immediately receive the witness of the Spirit that it was done. But just at that moment, he raised his head and shouted, glory to GOD, I have the blessing! Halleluia I am saved wholly! He continued for some time praising GOD, upon his knees; and after they arose from prayer, he still seemed filled with the HOLY GHOST, shouting and weeping alternately and uttering such exclamations as the following O, how easy the way! why have I never seen it before! O, I am just ready to live and ready to die.

His wife was greatly alarmed, fearing this wonderful experience was an especial preparation for immediate death. Mary's joy was scarcely less than when her own soul was first filled with the fulness of GOD'S love. This was not, as some might imagine, a momentary excitement; the change was most apparent to all who knew him. And although, (as is usually

the case under similar circumstances,) he was immediately called to pass through severe trials, yet he was wonderfully kept, by the power of GOD, from his hitherto easily besetting sin, impatience. But it was a heavy cross for him definitely to confess what the LORD had done for him. This, Mary considered an imperative duty, and urged its importance. Here grace again triumphed, conquering his natural diffidence, so that he was enabled to give unequivocal testimony to the efficacy of the all cleansing blood. His wife now became a firm believer in the doctrine. Though strange to say, she did not experience the blessing. As her fears subsided, she was much elated by the great change in her husband; she seemed to feel that it was peculiarly necessary for him, and so long as he should retain it, was perfectly satisfied, not realizing that she equally needed the same wonderful baptism. While in this place, Mary's consecration was tested in a new and unexpected manner. Soon after her arrival in town, she was informed of a brother and sister in the Church, persons of wealth and influence, who were very strongly attached to the people of their own sect, cordially welcoming to their hearts and home all belonging to them, whether strangers or acquaintances. Mary was soon introduced to them but was treated with marked coldness and not even invited to visit them. We have every reason to believe that this treatment was owing to their aversion to the doctrine of holiness, which she so

strongly advocated. To some this may seem incredible; yet, it is our opinion that if such would fully dedicate themselves to GOD, stand up boldly, at all times, for their Master, by precept and example, following the dictations of His Spirit in all things, they would realize the same experience. We are fully aware, that to make a profession of Christianity, and belong to the Church is now considered an honor rather than a reproach; nevertheless, pure and undefiled religion is no more popular at the present day, than when its blessed author and His immediate followers were scorned and set at naught by the multitude, for advocating its principles.

There are many called Christians who like the Corinthian Church anciently, "are carnal, and walk as men." They may have received a degree of the convicting and converting grace of GOD and run well for a season; but by disobeying the injunction of the apostle to "go on unto perfection" Heb. 6, 1. or other acts of disobedience, have in a measure backslidden; and when shown by the word of GOD, through His servants, that a full surrender must be made, and their hearts cleansed from all sin, in order to insure their salvation, the carnal mind which is "enmity against GOD" rebels and the faithful ambassador of CHRIST, is rejected and persecuted as a consequence.

To some the case of Mary and others of similar character, may seem like exceptional ones; but let such remember the words of our Lord JESUS "so like-

wise whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" Luke 14, 33. If it be urged that this language was addressed only to those who heard it, we reply that with equal propriety, we may reject any portion of the Holy Scriptures.

Let us bear in mind another solemn declaration of our blessed Lord "He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." John 12, 48.

Mary continued for a while to support herself by singing. She visited from time to time, among her friends the number of whom was constantly increasing, improving every opportunity of doing little errands for her Master both publicly and privately. In June 1867, her sister and husband, owing to the feeble health of the latter, deemed it expedient to remove West. They would gladly have taken Mary with them; but she did not feel that the path of duty lay in that direction.

After their departure, she spent some time with a Mr. and Mrs. H., friends of theirs, with whom she had previously become acquainted; and who from the first had taken the deepest interest in her welfare. Mrs. H., was an invalid, and found in Mary a congenial, sympathizing companion with whom she whiled away many a weary hour. She was here cordially welcomed to a home, whenever she should become tired of traveling.

Her friend had once received the blessing of perfect love; but had to some extent cast away her confidence; and thereby lost the clear witness of acceptance which she had once enjoyed. M. was made an humble instrument in benefiting her, both spiritually and physically by her prayers and counsel. Their communion with GOD and one another was most precious and intimate.

Mrs. H. employed for a short time, as an assistant in domestic affairs, a young lady whom Mary had formerly met and, who, when her term of service had expired, invited her to accompany her to her home in a neighboring town, and give a concert. While there she unexpectedly obtained pupils, and remained several months. Here she was very constant in her attendance on public worship, and took an active part in all social meetings, earnestly and constantly exhorting the Church to come up higher. She and the doctrine she taught, however, were for the most part rejected; yet the Lord owned and blessed her labors to the good of a few precious souls. Among these, was a Mrs. L., who was led to feel her need of purity, sought and received the blessing and became one of Mary's warmest friends.

When M. was about to leave town, she requested her to spend a few days with her. Mrs. L. had been for some time in feeble health; had employed several physicians to no purpose; and last of all, had consulted a clairvoyant, under whose care she had now

placed herself. Mary felt that the Great Physician who had healed her spiritual maladies had equal power to restore her physical health. She expressed this belief to her friend and suggested to her the propriety of trusting herself in His hands. The idea, though new to Mrs. L., seemed at once to recommend itself to her conscience and she resolved to lay aside all medicine, feeling that she could rely for healing upon her blessed Saviour, who had already done so much for her.

The next morning after this resolution was formed, which was the one succeeding Mary's arrival, Mr. L. said to her while at breakfast, Miss M., I consider that you have done to me and my family, the greatest possible injury. My wife has been sick a long time, we have tried every remedy without success, until we employed our present physician, under whose treatment she seems rapidly recovering ; and now you come here and advise her to lay aside medicine ; which advice if followed, would no doubt result in her death. I repeat it, I consider it the greatest possible wrong, and now I request you to leave my house.

Mary was deeply grieved, yet perfectly calm. She said, I am very sorry you should feel thus. Injury to you or your family was the farthest from my thoughts, and, be assured, I had the purest motives in my advice to your wife. He replied I know nothing about yonr motives ; but I feel that you have done very wrong.

Breakfast over she left at once, and thus abruptly ended the visit but just begun, in which she and her friend had anticipated the greatest pleasure. Trying as this was to Mary, she did not blame Mr. L. in the least. He was devotedly attached to his wife, and, of course, exceedingly anxious for her recovery, and to him the idea of depending on the LORD for help, without any human agency, seemed, as it does to many, presumptuous and absurd in the extreme; yet why should it be thought incredible that CHRIST has power, as formerly, to heal disease? Instances in proof of this fact have come under our own immediate observation. And, although this may not always be in keeping with GOD'S will, yet we believe such exhibitions of the Divine power would be far more frequent, but for a culpable lack of faith in the Church.

Soon after her arrival in that place, a Mr. and Mrs. B., hearing her earnest testimony in a prayer meeting, were strongly attracted to her, knowing nothing, however, of her history and circumstances. Their next information of her was received through a notice of her entertainment. They were painfully impressed with what to them, seemed the unfavorable contrast between that and what they had previously heard. She had hitherto felt obliged to introduce into her programme some pieces of a humorous character, in order to please certain of her patrons; but, as these were strictly moral in their tendency, she had not felt condemned in so doing.

Mr. B., attended her concert, and, soon after, came for her to spend a few days at his home. When there, he and his wife freely opened their hearts to her, on this subject. They told her frankly, and in the kindest spirit, how pained they were on reading her advertisement, and that they thought the course she pursued, in singing those lively songs, was inconsistent with her high profession, and calculated to bring a reproach upon the cause of CHRIST. Mary was grieved to the heart, not for their plain dealing, this she considered the strongest proof of their friendship; but the thought that perhaps she had wounded the cause dearer to her than life itself was hardly endurable. She could not then see that such was really the case; yet her mind was open to conviction; and she felt willing to make any sacrifice for the blessed Saviour and precious souls for whom He died. She earnestly prayed that light might be given her on this point, and shortly after, while at a camp-meeting in the vicinity, listening to a discourse from a holy man of GOD, on the words "He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of His lips the King shall be his friend," Prov., her prayer was answered, and duty made plain. As the preacher brought to view in the most eloquent manner, the various graces of the lips of the lovers of heart purity, she followed him closely, examined herself thoroughly and carefully, and resolved in the strength of grace, never to sing another humorous song.

The tempter here suggested, perhaps after all your

ado about entire sanctification, you never possessed the blessing. Her reply was prompt and decided. If I never did I will do so now; and with no special emotion she consecrated herself anew to CHRIST, applying by faith, his blood for the remission of all possible sins in the past, and the present cleansing of her heart from all unrighteousness. At the close of the sermon, opportunity was given for testimonies, which she felt strongly urged by the Spirit to improve. Her whole frame trembled beneath the mighty power of GOD, as she rehearsed what had been passing in her mind and exhorted believers to seek for pure hearts.

Soon after this Mary returned to her new home with Mr. and Mrs. H., and then took another concerting tour, through which means a more extensive field of labor for her Master was providentially opened. She now held meetings alternately, in three different places with a few who desired to attain to the higher Christian life; praying with, and counselling them as she was led by the Spirit. These were precious and profitable seasons, not only to herself but also to those with whom she labored.

When not employed in these more public exercises she made private visits, engaging in earnest spiritual conversation with all whom she met. Such was her burden for souls at times, that it was impossible for her to rest. She returned to her lodgings at the close of one of those days of active labor, unusually weary

and exhausted. The time for public meeting had almost arrived and she felt greatly the need of retirement and secret prayer; yet seemed to have hardly strength to reach her chamber. Her hostess strongly remonstrated with her; saying she felt that she was wearing herself out and throwing her life away by such over exertion. This remark touched Mary's tender conscience. She felt that to waste her life was indeed sinful, and if she was going beyond GOD'S requirement, it was time to stop. She immediately sought her room, threw herself upon her knees and earnestly besought a knowledge of His will, praying that, if He had more for her to do at this time, strength might be given her accordingly, and claiming the promise "as thy days so shall thy strength be." She arose from prayer wonderfully refreshed, attended meeting that evening, and labored for several subsequent days, with scarcely a feeling of weariness.

She realized sensibly the necessity of having her memory well stored with the Scriptures. She felt that she had read them sufficiently to be familiar with them; yet was painfully conscious of her inability to recall them as occasion might require, without aid from above. Here another promise was brought to her relief found in John 14, 26. This promise was afterward remarkably verified; passage after passage being often brought to her mind in rapid succession and without premeditation, in proof of the principles she endeavored to inculcate. Her plain, pointed tes-

timonies in regard to holiness and the absolute necessity of obtaining it, caused many to turn away from her with coldness and disdain; yet there were some in every place who received her messages joyfully, and to whom the gospel became the power of GOD unto complete salvation.

CHAPTER XI.

SUDDEN AND UNEXPECTED CHANGES.

MARY now felt an increasing conviction that the LORD had some greater work for her to do ; and this feeling became so strong, that she several times remarked to friends that if she belonged to the opposite sex she might think herself called to preach the gospel. This however, under present circumstances, seemed to her not only improbable but impossible. Her communion with GOD was exceedingly sweet and intimate and she realized the verification of her Saviour's promise. "If ye abide in me and my words in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." John 15, 7.

Those unutterable yearnings for companionship so natural to her, and which she had supposed to be as enduring as life itself, had long since become strangers to her bosom ; and she had reached that blessed state so longed for in the past where she could say with truth, "Thou, O CHRIST, art all I want." Grace had achieved greater conquests in her heart than she had ever imagined possible ; for she had often observed that

though the Christian religion would doubtless sustain one in the loss of human sympathy, she believed it could not make up for that loss. But present experience taught her, that she had made a great mistake. In seasons of weariness or sorrow, whenever she felt the need of a confidential, sympathizing companion, communion with JESUS afforded immediate relief and complete satisfaction. His love and presence were as real to her, as those of an earthly friend could be.

In the autumn of 1867, she became suddenly and strongly impressed with the idea that she was to receive the offer of marriage. This impression, though without foundation, seemed like an absolute certainty. It continued with her for some time but gradually passed away, and was at last quite forgotten.

Having a great desire to meet her dear friends in L. she started the ensuing Spring for that place, but, having acquaintances on the way, did not proceed thither immediately. She visited first the town of where she gave a concert and attended several prayer meetings. She here met for the first time Mr. G., a Christian brother who became deeply interested in her, through her earnest testimonies for CHRIST. She had some conversation with him in regard to entire consecration; found him very ready to admit its necessity, though not enjoying the blessing. She next proceeded to her sister's former residence, where she had Christian friends. Some of these who had been previously blessed through her private labors, felt

that the Church ought to receive the benefit of her counsel and teachings; and a meeting was accordingly appointed in which she should address the people on the subject of holiness. She had no idea of preaching, yet to her surprise was led to take a text, from which she spoke with considerable freedom. At the close of this meeting, another was appointed for the following Sabbath.

She visited, during the week, with Mr. and Mrs. S., with whom she had recently become acquainted. One day as she had retired to her room to obtain a little rest and had just fallen into a quiet slumber, she was suddenly awakened, and heard strange voices in an adjoining apartment. Instantly her curiosity was strongly excited to know who it might be. Mrs. S. soon came in, and she inquired who had arrived. She replied a Mr. G., from———and Mr. L., a Methodist preacher, and they have called to see you. M. was immediately convinced that the LORD had a work for her there, and felt in haste to accomplish it. Mr. G. introduced her to Mr. L., and after a few moments conversation with the former, relative to his spiritual state, she turned to the latter and asked if he enjoyed the great blessing of sanctification; he replied rather evasively in the negative. A deep sense of the responsibilities of the preacher, and his need of holiness caused her to answer with emphasis, I would not dare to preach the gospel with an unsanctified heart. His word and manner gave unmistakable proof of his un-

willingness to converse on the subject, and Mary would gladly have dropped it, as she naturally shrank from opposition, and was always reluctant to talk with those who were unwilling to hear. But she felt that her duty was not yet done, and, constrained by the Spirit, continued to urge upon him the immediate necessity of seeking the baptism of the HOLY GHOST.

Having been informed by brother G., that she was a singer he desired her to sing a hymn. In compliance with this request she sang with much fervor and feeling the soul stirring song of Philip Philips, "Stand like the brave." A mighty influence seemed at this time at work in his heart. He paced the room in a troubled, agitated manner, and at the close of the singing, proposed a season of prayer, in which he took the lead. While he was praying M. was exercised with such a burden of soul for him as could only be expressed by groans and tears. When she and some others had prayed, he once more earnestly besought the LORD for himself. Devotional exercises being ended, they resumed their conversation on spiritual things, in the midst of which, the above mentioned impressions about marriage, suddenly and vividly recurred to Mary's mind, accompanied with the conviction that Mr. L. was the one who would make the proposal. Had she then been aware of the fact that he was unmarried, this would not seem so remarkable, but she had, at this time, no knowledge whatever of

his family relations. As there was to be a meeting in the place that evening, the gentlemen decided to attend; and Mr. L. testified on that occasion that he had made a new and unreserved surrender of himself and his all to CHRIST, and believed the sacrifice was accepted, though as yet he had not received the witness of the SPIRIT. At the next meeting both these brethren were again present: and G. informed her, that he had partially made arrangements for her to speak at —— on the following Lord's day, provided she was willing to do so—requesting an immediate answer, in order to give the appointment an extensive circulation. The magnitude of the work on which she had but just entered, and a deep realization of her entire insufficiency for it, caused her to feel, at first, that she must decline; yet she durst not decide, without first asking counsel of the LORD. She therefore repaired to her lodgings as soon as possible, and, alone with GOD, earnestly besought His direction.—She then felt free to say to Mr. G., that she would be at —— at the time specified, Providence permitting. Accompanied by his daughter, he came for her on Saturday evening, and on Sunday morning took her first to his own home, where they found Mr. L. awaiting them. Mary immediately inquired as to his spiritual progress. He replied, "O, I am trying to live." This did not satisfy her; she felt that all was not right, and said, something is wrong: your consecration is not complete. He seemed somewhat offended,

and replied somewhat sharply, "What do you know about my consecration? I think you judge me rather hard." But little was said further, on this occasion, though she afterward learned that she had not been mistaken.

It appears that for some time previous to meeting her, he had been strongly exercised with the feeling that he ought to give himself wholly to the work of the ministry; but yet, owing to temporal circumstances, had endeavored to persuade himself that this was not of the LORD. But on the memorable day of their first interview, while listening to her earnest words, accompanied by the power and unction of the HOLY GHOST, he had resolved to yield this, as well as every point, to which he had testified, as above stated.—Soon after this, however, he was beset with severe temptation to doubt, and condemn himself for giving such strong public testimony, before receiving the witness of the SPIRIT. Having measurably cast away his confidence, by yielding somewhat to this temptation, room was made for another, which was quickly suggested. A flattering prospect presenting itself, he became entangled in some worldly business, which had proved unsuccessful: hence the disturbed, unsatisfied state of his mind, and lack of spiritual enjoyment, so apparent to M. at this time.

At her meeting the Divine power was graciously manifest. She spoke with great freedom, and so much to the acceptance of the people, that they desired her

to address them again, on the following Wednesday evening; to which she consented.

Mr. L. had signified his intention to leave town on Monday morning, but was easily persuaded by Mr. G. to remain that day, and assist him about some work. Had his employer been very exacting, he might not have been satisfied with his help, as he several times left his task to talk with M. and hear her sing. Their conversation, however, was strictly spiritual. A slight rain, the next morning, afforded an excuse to tarry that day also: and as the following was the time appointed for the meeting, he must attend that of course.—On Thursday, his work not being quite finished, he concluded to prolong his stay until Friday, when M. was to leave the place and return to V. One morning, while they were seated together in the dining room, discussing the question of giving his whole time to the LORD, he said, suddenly and with much earnestness, "And who will take care of you, when you are old and unable to travel and labor?" She replied, "Do you suppose my best Friend, whom I am now endeavoring to serve faithfully, will leave me to want when I am old? I can trust *Him* to take care of me." "I glory in your faith," said he.

On the morning of her departure, they were left alone in the sitting room: as usual, they seemed to be at no loss for a subject for conversation—a new topic seemed to be presented this morning. Let us listen; Mr. L. is speaking. "I suppose," said he, "provided a

favorable opportunity was offered, you would be willing to change your situation." "No!" she replied, "unless it was the LORD'S will I should do so." He laughed incredulously, and said, "I rather think you would." She reiterated her former assertion; and after a short pause, he said abruptly, "Suppose you should marry me, and we should go out laboring together." It was now her turn to manifest incredulity. "Why do you speak thus?" He replied, "Why not?" "I fear," said she, "you would not find in me a suitable companion." "What do you think of it?" he asked.—She replied, "I have told you repeatedly I would not take such a step on any consideration; unless I had positive evidence that it was GOD'S will." "And do you think that you could ascertain whether it were so or not?" She answered, "I presume I could, to my own satisfaction." "Then I wish you would do so," he replied. After a brief silence he added, half regretfully, "Perhaps I ought not to have spoken of it." "You need have no uneasiness on that account," said M., "for you are perfectly at liberty to consider it the same as if nothing had been said on the subject."—Breakfast was now announced, but Mary felt little inclination to eat. Her mind was agitated by strange and conflicting emotions: an important question had been proposed for consideration, which she felt utterly incapable of deciding. Let it not be supposed that she was in love, as it is usually termed; at least she was not consciously so.

Not a word of love had been spoken; he had not even taken her hand in token of affection. The proposal had been made in a cool, business like manner that would once have displeased and repelled her, and caused her to answer promptly and decidedly in the negative. But she had long since ceased to be guided by the mere impulse of fancy or natural inclination. She now regarded every thing in connection with her duty to GOD, her eternal interests, and those of her fellow men. Her deep anxiety and labor for the spiritual welfare of her friend, had drawn her to him in Christian fellowship and attachment, nor, had she any aversion to the idea of receiving him as a companion for life, if such were the LORD'S will, though she had long felt that were she permitted to choose, she would prefer to remain as she was. Realizing the weakness of her nature, and having been led away from her GOD, through inordinate affection, she was sure that unless a miracle of grace were wrought for her preservation, she should again backslide under similar circumstances yet she well knew the same power that had saved her so wonderfully, was able to keep her in any place which HIS will ordained that she should occupy.

After breakfast they were again left alone, perhaps purposely; and the conversation was resumed. Mr. L. began. "What do you think of that of which we were just talking?" "I think" said M. "it is a solemn question." "Of course it is," he answered; "and perhaps I should not have mentioned it." "Why

then bring it up again ?", she asked. "Would it not hurt your feelings" he replied, "if I should tell you all my heart ?" "Not at all" she answered. "Well then, to speak frankly I feel the need of your counsels, sympathy, and coöperation in labor; yet the thought of connecting myself with one in your situation is extremely crossing. Now does not that trouble you ?" "By no means, she replied. I had judged that such might be the case." "Probably" he continued, "you would be happier by yourself, than with me. I am unaccustomed to blind persons, and might not render you all that attention which you would think I ought; besides my disposition is such that you could not live happily with me in an unsanctified state."

Had such been his condition, Mary would have been at no loss how to decide the matter. She would not think for a moment of uniting herself with one who was not fully the LORD'S. It was only a few days previous to this time, while engaged in family devotions, the power of GOD came down in a remarkable manner upon them all, and Mr. L. then renewed his consecration and received the witness of full salvation. So filled was he with the Holy Spirit, that all obstacles and feelings of aversion to laboring for the Master were taken away and replaced by a strong desire to do so. The above frank declaration of his feelings served greatly to strengthen her regard for him; but she informed him that she could not then give

him a decided answer, as she would need time for prayer and deliberation. When interrogated as to how, when and where they should next meet, she replied, they would leave that with the LORD. If He designed their union he would open the way for their meeting.

She dared employ no measures or exert any will of her own to forward the matter; and when urged to commit herself on the subject, manifested great coolness, and thought she was quite indifferent in regard to it. "Shall I come to V. and see you?" he asked: "If you choose to do so," she replied "and when?" was his next inquiry: "when you please" she answered. "Perhaps then," said he "I will come next week: but where shall I find you?" "I do not know" she replied cooly, and thus they parted.

How little is one sometimes aware of the true state of the feelings, until they are tested; such was the case with Mary in this instance.

She discovered after leaving Mr. L. that her regard for him, was stronger than she had supposed. She felt quite sure that the enemy would take advantage of this affair if possible, to hinder her in the great work to which the LORD had called her, by distracting her mind; but she determined by the aid of divine grace to resist such temptation, and to pursue her labor steadily and with undivided heart. This however she found a more difficult task than she was aware; yet her faith constantly rested in the LORD, and His power to save.

Early the ensuing week as she went one evening to attend a prayer meeting, she was informed that Mr. L. was in the neighborhood ; as the meeting was not to be held in its accustomed place she was inclined to fear that he might not learn its whereabouts and therefore not be present ; or lest if he should come, brother S. at whose house she was stopping, should not invite him to accompany them home. But here faith again triumphed ; and she was enabled to leave the whole matter with quiet submission in the hands of GOD. Soon after the commencement of the exercises, her quick ear noticed his arrival which caused no regret. Notwithstanding, temptations to distractions she was favored, during the services, with a good degree of GOD'S manifest presence and power.

At the close, she was urged by some friends to tarry a little and play a few pieces upon the piano. Mr. L. was not aware that she possessed this accomplishment. To him it seemed a great mystery how one born blind could be skilled in music ; and he looked upon her with wonder and increased admiration. Her sensitive, sympathetic nature detected this and the discovery was productive of no little satisfaction.

She played piece after piece, not so much with a view of entertaining others as of displaying her musical talents to her astonished lover. She afterwards questioned whether she was right in indulging such feelings ; yet, on close examination, could not see that she had sinned in so doing.

We believe the desire for the approbation and good will of our friends, is a GOD given feeling; designed like all other impulses of human nature to be regulated and controlled by Divine grace; and only so far as religious and moral principle is sacrificed to such desires should they be considered sinful.

As Mary seated herself in the carriage to return to her lodgings, there was a little flutter of anxious solicitude at her heart as to whether she should meet her friend there; which however, was of short duration. The silence was soon broken by Jennie S. who asked, Does Mr. L. intend stopping with us to night? I invited him to do so, replied her father, and he accepted the invitation. On his arrival, Mrs. S. kindly gave them seats in the parlor saying as she did so, you can here have an opportunity to visit without interruption. This privilege, as may be supposed, was well improved. He insisted on her giving an immediate and decided answer; but this she did not feel prepared to do. On considering the matter after she had retired to rest, every objection seemed removed and it appeared right that she should become his wife; yet this was so much in accordance with her inclinations that she feared to act upon it lest her feelings should blind her in regard to the LORD'S will.

Next morning, when again pressed for an answer, she informed him that should nothing occur to cause her to change her mind, she would consent to his proposal, but expressed the wish that neither of them

might consider themselves unconditionally engaged until united by the marriage vow. To this he agreed and thus left her, promising to meet her the next week at H. After his departure her mental exercises became more painful than ever. The old yearnings of her nature which had slumbered for years, were now thoroughly re-aroused and clamored for gratification; but this only led her to cleave more closely to her GOD, and plead with greater earnestness, for His direction. She felt that she *must* leave her case in His hands; and prayed that if it were not best that their union should take place, He would in some way prevent their meeting at the time appointed, and cause their feelings to change in regard to it.

In a few days after he left her, Mr. G. called to say Mr. L. preferred to meet her at V., where she then was. She greatly desired to comply with his request and remain there; yet she felt that should friends come to take her to H. it might be duty to go: she secretly hoped that their coming might be postponed.

Next day she attended church under severe trial; struggling with distracting thoughts and conflicting emotions. At the close of the morning service, some one said to her, brother and sister T., are here, and wish you to go with them to H. To night, she asked? Yes, was the reply. A little exclamation of disappointment was on her lips, but she immediately checked it saying, well, the LORD'S will be done. She had never before met brother and sister T., though

they had heard her frequently spoken of, and for some time had felt very desirous to receive a visit from her. They were devoted Christians, happy in the love of GOD and of each other.

It seemed a long way to their residence, and as they rode on Mary's reflections ran thus. How much these friends seem to enjoy themselves together: why may not Mr. L. and myself be united, and so help one another in the Divine life? O, will he ever take this long journey to see me? perhaps by going to H. I shall hedge up the way of our meeting and thus bring an answer to my prayer. If so, I must, I will submit. I am determined in the strength of grace, that my will shall not rebel against my GOD. Notwithstanding this resolution, her persistent effort to overcome her feelings, and her pleasant surroundings at the home of Mr. and Mrs. T., the cloud still continued to hang over her.

The next day, however, found her rejoicing in complete victory. She now felt that she had not the slightest choice in regard to the matter, and was happy and satisfied with her SAVIOUR'S love. She awoke the following morning greatly burdened in spirit; feeling strongly impressed with the idea that her affairs were to be brought to an immediate crisis; and that the spiritual and temporal welfare of Mr. L. was, measurably committed to her keeping.

Now came a new test of her consecration. She shrank from exchanging her present situation for one

involving such responsibilities, yet, as in the former case, she would not allow selfish interest to influence her in favor of taking the step, so, now, she felt that she must not be governed by such considerations in deciding against it. Once more grace triumphed, in her complete acquiescence in GOD'S appointment.

Finding in Mrs. T. a warm, sympathizing friend, she confided to her her secret, and her feelings in regard to it. It was a beautiful morning, the 2d of June, 1868, they had been out a while enjoying the bright sunshine, and the fragrance of the blossoms, and talking over the subject, when returning to the house, they were met at the door by a sister, residing in the family, who announced Mr. L's arrival. She had not expected him until later in the week, and she now felt that the matter was decided. It was his wish that their marriage should take place immediately: and notwithstanding her preference to postpone it a few days, she consented that it should be as he deisred. He accordingly left her the next morning, for the purpose of making some necessary arrangements, and the following day returned to take her to B—, where their union was to be consummated.

The reader may judge, from the foregoing account of Mary's feelings, that she was not destitute of affection for Mr. L.; yet, soon after starting on their journey, a strange heart-sickness suddenly came over her, and at the same time all the regard she had felt for

him seemed to vanish. Whence this proceeded she was at a loss to determine, but felt quite sure that it was of the LORD or Satan: and she resolved, if possible, to ascertain its source, before acting from its influence. They had not proceeded far, when he said, "You still feel that it is GOD'S will that we should be united?" "I *have* felt thus," she replied, "but we should not always be governed by feelings. What is your mind in regard to it?" "I feel that it is right," he answered. "You know," she continued, "if you wish to drop it you are perfectly free to do so." "I have no such desire," he replied. The language of her heart now was, "LORD, what wilt thou have me to do?" must I proceed or shall I retract? She could not see the least light in the latter direction, and determined to go on at the risk of consequences. A calm solemnity pervaded her mind as she took upon her the marriage vows, and when all was over she felt a sense of the Divine approval, and that of her own conscience, which was indescribably sweet. Her feelings of affection, also, which had suddenly departed, returned, with their precious influence, and she was peaceful and happy.

CHAPTER XII.

LABORS AND TRAVELS.

THE reader may be interested in some further description and account of the character and life of Mr. L., and we therefore devote a little space, at the commencement of this chapter, to that purpose.

As is frequently the case with persons who are connected in marriage, he was strikingly unlike his wife in tastes and disposition; yet there were points of congenial similarity between them. Like her, he was frank, confiding and conscientious; but while she was habitually hopeful, he was inclined to gloom and despondency, and so strong were these tendencies at times, as completely to overpower him; rendering himself and his friends quite unhappy.

Those who knew him best found him to possess many noble and lovely traits of character; though he was wanting in that ease and affability of manner so necessary to win the confidence and friendship of strangers. Had they been actuated by other motives than love to GOD, each might have chosen differently; but this formed a strong bond of union between them, pre-

venting their contrarieties from producing that inharmony often so sadly apparent in the conjugal relation.

He was born and reared in circumstances of ease and affluence. At the early age of eight years, he was deprived, by death, of a father's care; and being an only son, the fondness of his mother led her unduly to indulge the caprices of his childhood and youth.

This absence of restraint might have proved a fatal injury, both to his temporal and eternal interests, but for the interposition of Divine grace, manifest in his conversion at the age of nineteen.

Soon after this he felt himself called to the ministry, and, obedient to those promptings of duty, he entered the traveling connection, under the auspices of the M. E. Church, where he devoted himself with great earnestness to the work of saving souls, receiving abundant proofs that his labors were owned and blessed of the LORD. With such zeal and energy did he address himself to his holy task, for seven years, that, at the expiration of that time, his health completely failed, rendering it necessary to discontinne his efforts in that direction.

It was about this time that he became acquainted with Miss P., a young lady of rare beauty and prepossessing appearance, whom he selected as his companion. By this change in his situation he felt obliged to lead a more settled life, and therefore engaged, for the most part, in secular business, laboring in the vineyard only occasionally. This we believe to have

been a great mistake, through the influence of which, his whole subsequent life was made a comparative failure. Six children were given them as the result of this marriage, three of whom deceased in infancy.—He, also, was visited with severe illness, which threatened to terminate his earthly career. And when ten years had passed, with their varying scenes of joy and sorrow, his loved and lovely wife became a victim of the fell destroyer, leaving him alone, with the care of his three remaining children.

The demands of his family and his own social nature would not suffer him long to remain thus; and he early sought and found another partner, a Mrs. M., a distant relative of his former wife whom he regarded with a deep and tender affection. He now became more than ever entangled with the affairs of this life, occupying almost his whole time in worldly pursuits preaching but very seldom, and only from an imperative sense of duty. As a natural consequence of such a course, fearful backslidings followed, which occasioned great unhappiness to himself and family; and brought upon them the chastenings of the LORD.

Perhaps the chief obstacle in the way of his laboring in the ministry, was his wife's strong aversion to it; which, combined with some other causes produced temporary estrangement; but the hand of disease was soon laid upon her; and for seven years she suffered as an invalid. She was then led to realize and repent

of the great wrong she had done in standing in the way of her husband's duty.

Misfortunes stopped not here: the heavy expenditures incident to his companion's protracted illness, together with an unwise investment of his property, resulted in a total loss of his worldly possessions. Hitherto unaccustomed as he had been to poverty and want, his naturally proud spirit was well nigh crushed beneath the weight of discouragement produced by these reverses

Shortly after the occurrence of the above mentioned events, his eldest son enlisted in his country's service and fell in battle. He now felt that the LORD was indeed cutting off his earthly hopes; and his ambitious desires for the acquisition of wealth were for awhile measurably checked. He now employed more of his time in the LORD'S vineyard; though owing to his wife's infirmity he felt that his presence was needed for the most part at home. But this did not long afford an excuse for his divided attention to his Master's work; for he was soon called to lay her in the grave.

By every discipline through which man is called to pass, the merciful Father designs to teach some lesson of love, trust and obedience: yet, with such difficulty are these blessed lessons acquired, and so tenaciously does the heart cling to transitory things, that they must often be repeated, and illustrated in various forms, ere the affections become weaned from the

world, and placed on GOD and heaven. It would now appear that every hindrance was removed, and that he would now give himself fully to the LORD and His service. His children were able to care for themselves; all, save the youngest, a son by his last marriage, having attained their majority. But it seemed almost impossible for him as yet, entirely to relinquish the hope of regaining his lost possessions; and he therefore, continued to mingle with the duties of his sacred calling, secular pursuits. A degree of success attended his efforts, which stimulated him to fresh exertions, and excited strong desires to plunge still deeper into business; in order to the accomplishment of which, he became somewhat involved in debt: still he was unable to efface from his mind, the impression that he ought to give his whole time to the ministry, notwithstanding his reluctance to believe it his duty. This was his condition when he first met with Mary: the change in his feelings and purposes since that time have already been stated. They now intended, henceforth to devote their united efforts to the salvation of souls.

They spent a few days after their marriage at His former boarding place in B., and then took a journey to the town of P., some forty miles distant, where his son was then residing with a maternal uncle, attending school. Mr. L., entertained the most profound respect and affectionate regard for his new companion and inclined to be proud of her abilities and accom-

plishments, yet, he was strongly tempted at times with feelings of mortification in consequence of her lack of sight, particularly, when presenting her to his friends. During the previous Winter, his son had met with an accident which nearly proved fatal and made him a cripple for life: his father had not seen him since his convalescence: He and some other members of the family were absent when they arrived; only a step-mother of his second wife being present. She remarked, on being introduced to Mary, O, I am so glad you poor boy will now have a home. She had not yet noticed her infirmity; and now came the painful necessity of making it known, and also of disappointing her hopes for his son, by informing her as to the manner of life they intended to lead. Instead of manifesting regret and opposition as they had feared, she seemed heartily to acquiesce in their plans, and to regard Mary with affectionate interest, being herself a Christian. But when a few hours later the boy came hobbling in on crutches the cloud which, during the whole day, had hung over the mind of the father, burst in a storm of wild emotion, too deep for the utterance of words. O, how Mary's heart bled for her poor husband; she had no selfish regret in regard to his sensitiveness on her account; but deplored it only as it was a source of grief to him.

The clouds at length passed away, and the bright sunshine once more beamed upon them; the visit was continued and terminated both profitably and pleasant-

ly. On their return to B., an incident occurred which was productive of widely different feelings to M., and her husband. Just before they reached their destination, she was thrown from the carriage. She felt herself going and thought that perhaps immediate death awaited her; yet she was perfectly calm and free from fear; feeling a blessed assurance that living or dying, all was well. Mr. L., on the contrary, was almost frantic with alarm. As she fell silently to the ground he rushed to her, and exclaiming with great agitation, my GOD, are you alive, would hardly believe her repeated affirmations that she was not injured at all.

The visit to L., which was contemplated early in the Spring, was not made until late the following Summer. Mary's friends, were completely taken by surprise at the change of her situation, and generally pleased with her husband's appearance. They remained several weeks in that place and vicinity; during which time they were not wholly employed in visiting, but much about their Master's business. One incident connected with their labors at this season is worthy of notice as illustrative of the results of faithful personal effort. While at B., a sister D., cordially invited them to make her house their home, which they did. This sister seemed quite engaged in the service of GOD, but did not enjoy the blessing of perfect love, though a firm believer in the doctrine. She possessed a highly intelligent mind and superior talents; and M., felt that were these wholly dedicated to

CHRIST, her own welfare would not only be secured, but she might also exert a powerful influence for good. She therefore strongly urged upon her the importance of seeking this blessed state.

Sister D., however seemed quite satisfied at first with her present attainments: but as Mary continued to converse with her from time to time upon the subject, the HOLY SPIRIT enforced upon her heart the truth of her words, and inclined her at times to take her counsel. But other causes were at work with her, producing opposite effects. The arch tempter, together with the remains of depravity in her nature, strove against these sacred influences, not only causing her to refuse to yield, but producing feelings of enmity toward her friend and sister who had so faithfully admonished her. She manifested, however, a commendable resistance of these temptations, so far as outward expression was concerned; but, though M. continued to labor with, and earnestly to pray for her, she was obliged to leave the place without realizing the accomplishment of her desire. Two days afterwards, she received a letter from her filling her heart with joy and gratitude; from which we give the following extract.

"Dear Brother and Sister, I can not resist the inclination I have to write you a line, although it is scarcely two days since I have been separated from you, and I feel assured that before you finish reading, you will not only excuse the liberty I take in writing

to you, but will rejoice with me in the liberty wherewith CHRIST has made me free. I will try and not be tedious but I feel that I must express to you some of the emotions, which have filled my soul since you left me. I will commence with the feelings I had after your departure.

For a few moments it seemed to me that my house was indeed left to me desolate. I felt that I had no one to sympathize with me in my joys and sorrows. I could not settle my mind on my work or any thing else. At last I took up those verses that you wrote for me and read them; they told me where to go for sympathy and comfort. I took it to the LORD in prayer; and Oh, such a blessed season as I had I am powerless to describe. I endeavored to make a new and entire consecration of myself to GOD; and I felt that JESUS came and possessed me wholly. I felt that my whole heart and soul was filled with the love of GOD; I was full to overflowing. I could say He saves me now, I do believe, from a full heart, and, since then, I do not think there has been a moment but I have felt that JESUS was with me; although to-day I have had some trials, yet they have only served to show me what a blessing, I have received, and increase my faith in CHRIST; for I know things that would once have greatly disturbed me have now no power to move me. I must tell you how I feel in regard to confessing what the LORD has done for me. I have come to the conclusion that in order to maintain my stand-

ing before GOD and the world, I must tell, not only a few brethren and sisters but all my neighbors and friends, what the LORD hath wrought for my soul. I intend, GOD helping me, to improve the first opportunity of doing so and not to lower the standard in the least, but to maintain it by faith, prayers and works, and even with my life if need be.

After their return from this tour, they made a visit to a Mrs. K., a sister of Mr. L., residing at H. Most of his friends felt that he had made a great mistake, in selecting as a companion one in Mary's situation, but not so with this sister; knowing that her brother had always felt himself called to the ministry, and the hindrances he had met in his past domestic relations, she inclined to regard this as a providential opening, though not herself a professed Christian. She received Mary with great cordiality, manifesting from the very first the tenderest sympathy for, and the deepest interest in her. Her mind and tastes were congenial with those of M., and the warmest friendship sprung up between them. One thing only marred the enjoyment of her society, namely, the fact that she could not consider her a sister in CHRIST. She used every persuasion in her power to induce her to become such, praying much with, and for her; but with little apparent effect.

While at H. they held several meetings, at a school house, some distance from the village; where they met with considerable persecution from the ungodly

portion of the community: yet the LORD was with them, crowning their efforts with a degree of success. So strong was the opposition, and so powerfully did they feel its influence, that Mr. L. thought it not duty to protract their labors in that place, but deemed it expedient to leave immediately. Though M. herself was much cast down, she felt that her work there was not yet done, and informed her husband of the fact. His mind, however, remained unchanged, and she felt that she must submit to his wishes, though it seemed almost impossible to disengage herself from the dear people, whose welfare lay so near her heart. As they went on their way, her agonized feelings found expression in copious tears. Their road led past the residence of Mr. S., an old friend of Mr. L., with whom he had a little matter of business, and called to see him; though M., feeling that she could not conceal her emotions, preferred to remain without, alone. She was not suffered to do so, however, for Mrs. S. was soon by her side, and insisted that she should go in. She was greatly comforted by the genial presence and cheering words of this dear sister. They were persuaded to remain during the night, and Mr. L. concluded to allow his wife to return next day, and finish her work.

In going from place to place, they realized their entire dependence for direction upon the LORD, who graciously vouchsafed to them the guidance of His SPIRIT, as well as His providences, in a remarkable manner.

Mr. L. was often impressed so strongly, that it seemed almost as if an audible voice spoke to him, directing him to certain places: while to Mary was revealed the time of their departure, by a clear conviction that their work there was finished, accompanied by a strong inclination to leave the place, however pleasantly they might be situated. She frequently expressed herself, on these occasions, in the language of the apostle, "having no more place in these parts" They had abundant proof that these feelings were of Divine origin, though we consider it not safe to be governed wholly by impressions. They should never be followed without special prayer.

Their labors and travels, during the winter of 1869, were in the State of Vermont. The decided stand they took in relation to the doctrine and experience of Christian holiness, and their strong denunciations of sin in all its forms, in the church as well as in the world, rendered them radical in the estimation of some, both in the ministry and membership; in consequence of which they met with a cool reception in many places. In some instances, however, their opponents were made, through their instrumentality, the subjects of sanctifying grace; and thus became their warmest friends—one example we will mention.

They visited the town of B., where they arrived on Saturday, and next day attended the M. E. Church. The pastor was a Bro. E., who resided at A., and preached alternately there and at B. Though aware

that they two were laborers in the vineyard, he did not appear to recognize them as such: the church, generally, seemed also quite distant. In the youthful days of Mr. L., it was customary for the preacher to give liberty for exhortation at the close of the sermon —a custom which he felt should never have been discontinued. Feeling strongly impressed, by the SPIRIT as he believed, he rose, at the conclusion of the morning's discourse, and powerfully exhorted minister and members to purity of heart and life. This met with no response, either from pastor or people, but on the contrary excited strong opposition, which though not expressed in words was painfully felt, both by himself and companion. He remarked to her, during the intermission, that he should not exhort in the afternoon, on any account. But, to her surprise, the speaker had no sooner sat down than her husband was once more on his feet, and his mouth opened in testimony. Feeling desirous that Mary should have an opportunity of laboring in that place, and having ascertained that the present evening was unoccupied, he went to Bro. E. at noon and asked the privilege of holding a meeting. He replied that it should be decided by a vote of the congregation. The expression was accordingly taken, and his wish granted. Bro. E. did not favor them with his presence, though cordially invited to do so. There was a good attendance, and Mary spoke with considerable freedom. The meeting seemed satisfactory to all, yet contrary to their expect-

ations no one requested them to appoint another, and they concluded to leave town the next day. But at the close of the exercises, a sister came forward and expressed an earnest desire to receive a visit from them. They accordingly changed their plans, and went, on Monday morning, to her house. Mary felt that their work in that place was not yet finished, and was constantly expecting that some one would send in a request for more meetings, but none came. After spending a few days with this family, they proceeded to A., where Mr. E. resided; but thinking he would not care to see them, they passed him by. They took lodgings with his brother-in-law, and appointed a meeting for the following evening.

In the morning Mr. L. met Mr. E. on the street; and after the usual salutations the latter said, "Why did you not call at our house?" "Because," replied Mr. L., frankly, "you did not invite me to do so." He offered some slight apology for his neglect, after which Mr. L. asked, "How do you stand in relation to the doctrine and experience of Christian holiness?" "Perhaps," answered he, "my belief differs somewhat from yours; but it is cold, here. Come and see us, before you leave town, and we will talk about it." They held two meetings in the place at that time, at both which Mr. E. was present. As M. discoursed, on the last evening, upon the scenes of the judgment, she was deeply moved, and spoke with great earnestness. Mr. E. invited them to accompany him home, and they accepted the

invitation. He inclined to talk but little that night; but next morning, after family prayers, Mary commenced conversing with him on Christian experience. The LORD seemed to give her access to his heart: and as she continued plying him with close questions, he was compelled to acknowledge his belief in the doctrine, and at the same time to confess that he did not enjoy the blessing.

Mary's duty did not seem to be completed with this conversation: whenever she met him during the day the Spirit gave her a word for him. The follow-morning on their way to church, the subject was resumed; and M. said, O, that the LORD would show you the true condition of your heart. Perhaps he does, he replied; while his voice trembled with emotion, and the tears flowed freely.

That evening in a social meeting he testified before his people that he was not where he ought to be; and if he continued where he then was, he felt that he must be lost, but expressed a determination to seek a higher state. The Saviour's promise to the seeker, was soon verified in his experience; for the next morning found him rejoicing in the fulness of GOD'S love.

His labors had hitherto been generally acceptable and his Christian character held in high esteem by the community; yet he informed Mr. and Mrs. L., after this great change, that he had been sadly backslidden; and wholly in consequence of his rejection of this

blessed truth, and his neglect to seek and obtain a clean heart. So long had he persisted in his rebellion against this work of the LORD, that the very terms in which this state is expressed, such as holiness, perfect love, entire sanctification, &c. were exceedingly distasteful to him, and he could hardly endure to hear them spoken. This may afford an explanation of his former treatment of these his fellow laborers.

So manifest was the difference between his ministrations prior and subsequent to this experience that even the unconverted remarked the increased power and earnestness of his preaching. To some it may seem impossible that so great a change could have been effected in so short a time ; yet, such should remember that with GOD, all things are possible ; and that he has declared in His word, His willingness to pardon and cleanse the heart of the wanderer who returns unto Him.

Many who are skeptical in regard to entire sanctification as a specific work, maintain that those who profess to have received it are merely reclaimed from a backslidden state : such may fancy they find in this example a proof of their theory yet we believe both scripture and experience contradict this idea.

The blessing of perfect love should never be expected by a backslider, unless, as in this case, the backsliding is occasioned by a rejection of light on that particular point. The work of returning to GOD must be commenced precisely where the wandering

began. As a rule, one should have a clear evidence of justification, before seeking the higher blessing; yet in instances like the above it is impossible to be justified unless wholly sanctified.

The Thessalonians were not addressed at all as backsliders and yet the apostle prayed for and taught them to expect their entire sanctification. See 1st Thessalonians 5, 23, 24.

The young convert should be led to seek this attainment while in the freshness and fervor of early experience instead of settling down for years, as many do, content with their present enjoyment; which course is sure to result in backsliding.

Immediately after Mr. E., received this baptism Mr. and Mrs. L. had a special message from the people of B., urging them to return and hold more meetings there; they expressed great surprise and regret at having allowed them to leave so soon; but in this the hand of the LORD was clearly apparent. Their pastor had not then either the disposition or spiritual ability to labor with them; and had they remained at this time, his influence would doubtless have been a hindrance to their success. They were, therefore, sent first on a mission to him, and when he was fully qualified, they were permitted to return, and assisted by him, to finish their work.

They labored several weeks in those towns, and were favored to see some glorious results. Mrs. E., as well as her husband was made a partaker of full

salvation, and they regarded Mr. and Mrs. L. as members of their own family; cordially welcoming them to their home while they remained in the place.

During this Winter Mary was almost constantly impressed with the idea of the brevity of her life. She frequently remarked to her companion, that she would not be surprised if called away at any moment. She seemed to live in the atmosphere of heaven. It appeared to her, that there was but a step between herself and glory: yet her solemn realization of eternal things, filled her with alarm for those around her who were unsaved; which rendered her preaching deeply impressive, as she warned her hearers with earnest entreaties and many tears, to be reconciled to GOD, and prepare to meet their Judge.

While in the town of J. she and her husband were for a time quite indisposed. Mary was strongly threatened with a severe, and as she believed fatal illness. But through the skillful nursing of their kind hostess, she escaped a fever, which at first seemed inevitable. For several weeks, however, her strength seemed rapidly declining; and she felt that her work was nearly finished. But notwithstanding extreme physical weakness, she continued to labor, speaking almost every evening with great earnestness and fervor. She often felt at the commencement of a meeting quite incompetent to the task before her; but when she arose in the presence of a dying congregation to deliver her message from GOD, everything else was

forgotten in her intense interest in her subject, and desire for the salvation of souls.

In preaching she was led in a very remarkable manner. She frequently entered the house of worship, without any idea even what her theme should be. During the preliminary exercises, a text would be suggested to her mind; but nothing further until she commenced speaking; when ideas would be presented faster than she could utter them, and she would discourse perhaps for an hour in exposition of the text.

She often had such a crushing sense of her entire insufficiency for the great work to which she was called, as led her to throw herself in helpless desperation into the hands of the LORD and lie passively there in complete self renunciation.

There were her very best seasons; for she felt that she could adopt the apostle's language "when I am weak then I am strong."

It is not our purpose to give a minute account of their labors, or the experience of those who were benefitted through their instrumentality; but only to narrate such instances as most clearly illustrate the conquests of grace,

The precarious state of her health at this time rendered itinerant life very wearisome to her; although, as another has expressed it, she was weary in rather than of the work. She often felt that it would be far easier for her to lie down and die than live and strug-

gle thus with physical weakness. But every day brought a sufficiency of strength for its duties, and she began gradually to rally from her debility; until to her surprise, health was completely restored.

The reader may ask, whence those impressions in regard to her speedy dissolution? We answer, we can account for them only by the supposition, that it might have been necessary that she should have a realizing sense of eternal things, in order to give greater force to her preaching and that this could only be produced by the idea of death, and the judgment being thus vividly impressed upon her mind.

The following Summer, a national camp-meeting was held, at which they greatly desired to be present, and outward circumstances seemed to favor this desire: but after making it a subject of prayer for a short time, Mary remarked to her husband, that she could see no light in that direction, and felt that she should not be permitted to attend. This feeling daily grew stronger, until without any other apparent cause, she abandoned the idea. Soon after this, they made their annual visit to L. where Mr. L. left her and returned to B., in order to transact some business resolving that he would attend the meeting. But on seeking the divine direction the words go to G., as if spoken by an audible voice, were impressed upon his mind. He determined at first not to heed them thinking it might be a hallucination but the same words were given in answer to his prayers, and

so deep was the impression produced thereby, that he was at last constrained to yield. He therefore abandoned the idea of attending the national meeting, returned to L., and, accompanied by his wife, proceeded to G. Here they were cordially welcomed by the preacher, and were permitted to sow some seed; though no opportunity for protracted effort presented itself. Through the influence of their host, however, they were directed to the town of S., where a wide field of labor opened before them. Here they were engaged several weeks; and received abundant evidence that their work was owned and blessed of God.

Large and attentive congregations listened to the word of life from their lips; believers were quickened, drooping souls revived, and their own faith greatly confirmed and strengthened by the proofs they received that their former impressions had been produced by the Divine Spirit. Especially was this the case with Mary, to whom such tokens of the love and condescension of her heavenly friend, were exceedingly precious and comforting.

As the autumn approached and preparations were made for worship in the leafy temple, an urgent invitation was extended to them by friends at S., to attend with them one of those feasts of tabernacles in a neighboring town; and, believing this to be in the divine order, the invitation was accepted. From the time this course was decided upon, M., was exercised with an unusual spirit of labor; and longed to be on

the ground, that she might spread the news of free and full salvation. Not that she expected to be employed as a preacher, but felt that she wouldbe satisfied with the privilege of laboring by personal effort and in the social meeting.

On arriving at the place, however, (though her desire in this direction was not in the least diminished,) she felt no freedom of spirit; but, on the contrary, whenever she attempted to speak or pray, seemed held by an unseen power. She and her husband received no more notice or attention from the clergy than if they had been the most obscure members; yet this excited not the least feeling of jealousy. She was willing—nay, glad, to occupy the most humble position if she might but be allowed to deliver to the dear people the message of love from her blessed SAVIOUR.—She therefore endeavored, for a time, to improve every opportunity of doing so; but at length became so crushed by the above mentioned influence, (though no word of opposition was spoken,) that she felt obliged to relinquish her efforts, and lay the responsibility upon those who had thus held her. The same spell which was thrown over her, seemed, measurably, to rest on the whole meeting; and, apparently, but very little good was accomplished. This failure was doubtless in consequence of the leader's having rejected the LORD'S little ones.

The reader may be at a loss to account for their having done so. We believe that the cause may be

explained by the fact that, even in the church whose leading doctrine is that of holiness, many, both in the ministry and membership, ignore this work as a speciality. Nay, more, some of these are strongly prejudiced against it and those who preach it. GOD pity and lead them to see their mistake.

The still small voice was soon heard again by Mr. L., directing them to take a tour to the State of New York. They had no friends in those parts, nor any outward inducements to travel in that direction ; but, after making the matter a subject of earnest prayer, were persuaded that the suggestion was from the LORD and determined to obey.

About this time severe damage was done by powerful rains, which had swollen the streams and washed the roads, rendering them in many places impassable. After having started for L—, in Vermont, where they intended to tarry awhile, they were informed that it was impossible to reach the place, as no trains had passed through for several days.

This information at first threw Mr. L. into a state of perplexity, but knowing if GOD had directed them there were no impossibilities in the case, he soon recovered his confidence and resolved to make the trial. On further inquiry he ascertained that the first trip was to be made that day, and they would probably go through ; though it was somewhat doubtful.

They ventured on board the train and soon arrived safely at L, They called upon Mrs. P., one of Mary's

spiritual children, who received her most joyfully, but her husband soon became convinced that there was no work for him in that place, and decided to leave immediately.

Mary however, at the earnest solicitations of her friends remained a few days, and was favored with opportunity to labor publicly and privately with a good degree of freedom. When her work was accomplished, she joined her husband at R. where a warm welcome awaited her from Christian friends with whom he had been kindly entertained. Here they found a religious convention in session, which afforded them the privilege of scattering the good seed; though they found no extensive field of labor at R.

At the convention they met for the first time Mr. P. a preacher from——who importuned them to come and help him. He was very devoted and deeply engaged in his work; and his heart bled on account of the desolation of Zion. His people were indeed in a deplorable condition; jealousies had crept in which had caused serious divisions. These had resulted in the withdrawal of the disaffected ones, who, about this time, were preparing themselves to organize a separate body.

Soon after the arrival of Mr. and Mrs. L., this event took place. Several preachers were present from abroad; and, at the close of the exercises, one of them announced in behalf of the newly formed Church, a meeting to be holden that evening. An appoint-

ment had previously been given by Mr. P. for Mr. and Mrs. L. at the same time and place. What was to be done? many of Mr. P.'s people were highly indignant, and expressed a strong desire that he and his co-laborers should assert their claim, pledging themselves, if they would do so, to dispossess the offending party, by force if necessary. But the Prince of Peace held sway in the hearts of His servants; and they felt there was but one course for them to pursue namely, to avoid all strife and contention, manifesting, under all circumstances, the spirit of their blessed Master, and leaving the event with Him. They therefore, at the time appointed, quietly took their seats among the congregation.

It afterward appeared that the stranger ministers had, at the time, no knowledge of their appointment, and, on learning the fact, were much troubled and perplexed. They came to Mr. P. and Mr. L. and urged them to take the lead of the exercises. They refused however, kindly giving the preference to them, and the meeting went on harmoniously; thus the enemy was defeated and the grace of GOD prevailed They remained several weeks in the place, during which time Mr. P. was so burdened for the cause, that he was unable to rest by day or night. This inspired in Mary strong hope of a revival, though her husband felt that, under the circumstances, nothing could be done in that direction, and thus it proved.

In the town of D. resided a daughter of Mr. L.

whom Mary had never met. As this place lay directly in their route, an opportunity was afforded to visit her. The acquaintance proved very pleasant to them both. She had a little son then, about five years of age, who, by his strong affection, remarkable intelligence, and frank, artless manners, soon won a place in Mary's loving heart. The evening after their arrival, they held a long conversation on spiritual things. This was at first carried on mostly by M., in a general manner; and Mrs. G. and her husband seemed deeply interested. But when the remarks became personal and the subject was pressed home, she became very uneasy, and at last replied abruptly, well, I don't know that I care to hear any more upon the subject. Whenever I think of it I become excited, and feel badly; and I don't know that I care for religion at all. Very well answered Mary; there is no compulsion in this matter, if you deliberately say you do not want salvation, the LORD will never force it upon you. I may never speak to you again in regard to it. but as one who loves your soul, I advise you to be careful how you decide. These last words were spoken with great solemnity and emphasis.

After engaging in prayer with the family, they all retired to rest Mary felt that she had done her duty; GOD had blessed her in it; and, with a peaceful heart and a clear conscience, she was soon lost in a quiet sleep.

Her slumber was suddenly broken by a voice call-

ing her name. She thought at first she had been dreaming; but the call was soon repeated. She responded immediately, and Mrs G. said in a distressed tone, will you come down here a moment? The sound of her voice alarmed M. and she asked, What is the matter? I want to talk with you about religion, was the reply. She hastened down the stairs, and Mrs. G. informed her that she had been unable to sleep for thinking of the subject on which they had been conversing. The idea was strongly and clearly impressed upon her mind, that this was the last call she should ever receive to seek the Lord; and should she neglect to do so at this time, she should be forever lost. She had not so much feeling as at some former times, yet could not shake off the impression that she must decide immediately. And now, she added, what shall I do? Act according to the light you have received, replied Mary, and GOD will give the necessary feeling. But I am so proud, said she. You can never rid yourself of your pride or any other sin, said M., but come to CHRIST just as you are, and He will take it all away. And now what can I do for you? I ought to ask you to pray for me, she replied frankly; but it is so humiliating. The cross must be borne, and self humbled if you would be a Christian, said M., shall I pray for you, then? Yes, if you will, she replied. And will you pray for yourself? O, that will be so crossing, said she. But you will do it if you feel that you ought? I will she replied; and

they knelt together. Mary endeavored to bring in the arms of her faith, the case of this dear daughter to the LORD.

Mrs. G. seemed greatly moved, weeping and sobbing violently while her mother was praying; and when she ceased, she too opened her mouth in earnest though broken supplication. She renounced herself, giving her heart with all its pride and unbelief, to her Saviour, and tremblingly laying hold by faith on his promises, when suddenly her prayer was changed to exultation, and she exclaimed, O I do believe! I have it now! and running to her mother, she threw her arms around her saying, O yes I know I have it; O, I love you now! I am happy, and now I can rest.

The next morning found her the victim of severe temptations. Certain tests of her fidelity had been presented to her mind, from which she shrank, endeavoring to persuade herself that the LORD did not require these things. Indeed it would seem that her circumstances were quite unfavorable to a Christian life. The church under whose influence she would come, should she take a decided stand for CHRIST, was apparently very proud and popular. Female testimony was rarely if ever heard in the meetings, and the humble, self denying spirit of CHRIST seldom exhibited. Besides, her husband was not a Christian, and she had no help in that direction. Yet, had she resolved to serve GOD at any cost, and clung with an unyielding grasp of faith to her Almighty Saviour,

she might have won her companion, surmounted all obstacles, and exerted a powerful influence on the side of truth and right. Her mother endeavored to persuade her to yield her will to GOD on every point; but she shrank from making a full consecration by separating herself from the world and becoming singular for CHRIST'S sake, and thereby measurably lost the light and peace which had gladdened her soul, though she did not wholly lose her hold on GOD. Thus Mary left her with a sorrowful heart, but ceased not to make her a subject of constant and earnest prayer.

On passing through the village of B. they found a protracted meeting in progress, and were persuaded by the pastor and some of the brethren to remain a few days; but nothing worthy of special notice marked their stay in that place.

Their next movement brought them to S. in the state of New York, and here commenced a series of new and interesting experiences. Before starting on this tour Mr. L. in praying for a knowledge of the Divine will, requested of the LORD that, if they had mistaken the path of duty, their way might be hedged up. They had never felt at liberty to solicit any compensation for their labors, believing that, if GOD had called them, He would incline the hearts of the people to supply their need.

Before leaving New England, they had met a brother and sister bolonging to a sect called free Methodists; and being favorably impressed with their appearance

and their description of this people, they were desirous of becoming acquainted with them. There was a small church of that order at S., and they sought and obtained lodgings at the residence of one of its members. They arrived late Saturday night and found comfortable accomodations, but were treated with a degree of coolness and reserve which caused them to feel not quite at their ease.

The next day they attended their meeting and were much pleased with the preaching; though they witnessed some demonstrations which to them were new and seemed very peculiar. A prayer meeting was appointed for the following evening, which they also attended. The people seemed very emotional; and during the first season of prayer, some shouted, some shrieked, and others uttered a sort of hoot resembling a steam whistle. A suggestion was presented to the mind of Mr. L. that they were a class of fanatics; but he quietly left them with the LORD, and was not at all disturbed. Not so with Mary; these noisy demonstrations greatly confused and distracted her thoughts, and she was at a loss to know why she could not more fully sympathize with them, if her own heart was right. This query perplexed and tried her, but when opportunity was afforded, she attempted to pray, when all were silent as death; not even a responsive amen was heard. This increased her uneasiness by suggesting the idea that the lack of sympathy was mutual; that they could not unite with the spir-

it of her prayer, and hence their silence. As the praying continued, however, a precious sense of the Divine presence was manifested to her, melting her heart to tenderness and her eyes to tears. Accompanying this there came a strong impression that she ought to relate the trial through which she had been passing, and, if possible, ascertain through these brethren and sisters, the defect in her own experience, if such really existed. At the close of this season of prayer, the pastor remarked, there are some present this evening who are seeking the blessing of perfect love, and these may have some confessions to make before obtaining it. If so, this duty should be attended to at once.

Mrs. H., with whom Mary and her husband had been stopping, then arose and said, perhaps I have something to do in this direction. I have not felt just right toward brother and sister L. though I have endeavored to do so. But to-night I feel differently, and believe them to be true children of GOD. Mary felt that now was her time to testify, which she did substantially as follows.

Since coming into this meeting I have witnessed some demonstrations which are quite new to me, and I have been somewhat tried. Not that I object to such manifestations, if produced by the spirit of GOD, or to being exercised in this manner myself if it is His will; for surely I am willing to be led in whatever way He may choose. But I marvel at the lack of

emotion in my Christian experience ; it is seldom I feel even like shouting.

For years I have borne witness to the efficacy of CHRIST'S blood to cleanse me from all sin ; and have endeavored to lead others also into the way of holiness, yet, if I am not right, I desire to be set aright, and am willing to be taught, even by the humblest of GOD'S people. If these brethren and sisters have attained to a state in advance of me, I earnestly desire to reach the same.

This testimony was given from a heart filled with divine love whose tenderness found expression in copious tears, and met a ready response in kindred souls.

No one found any fault with her experience : on the contrary, they expressed the utmost confidence in her as a Christian, and the coldness and reserve which had hitherto been manifested toward them was now succeeded by an atmosphere of sympathy and kind feeling. She enjoyed perfect freedom of spirit during the remaining exercises of the meeting ; and was drawn by the strong cords of Christian love toward some whose appearance heretofore had been extremely repulsive. But love and joy and good meetings will not wholly supply the wants of the outward man : and when, after retiring to rest, they were compelled to look their circumstances in the face, midnight darkness seemed to enshroud their prospects. There was no demand for their services here, nor did they feel at

liberty to remain another day. Yet their means had become exhausted, thereby rendering it impossible to leave.

What could they do? Mr. L. was well nigh discouraged, but Mary was strong in faith that help would come from GOD, in some way; though their condition, combined with her husband's extreme depression, served to weigh down her spirit. The next morning Mr. L. felt impressed to call on a Baptist preacher, in town; with whom he enjoyed a pleasant and profitable interview, and in whom he found a warm and cordial friend. When about to leave he placed in his hand a bank note, as a substantial proof of the interest he felt in his welfare—and thus their way was opened to leave the place.

A minute account of their travels, in this State might be tedious to the reader; we, therefore, relate only such incidents as we deem most interesting.—There appeared, for a long time, no opening for protracted effort. They passed rapidly from town to town, often remaining but a single night in a place. In such cases, however, they were almost sure to find prayer, or class meetings, which they always attended, and labored as the SPIRIT might direct. They also improved every opportunity of sowing good seed as they went, in depots, cars, coaches and dwelling houses—leaving the event with Him who alone "giveth the increase."

Being constantly subjected to expense in traveling, and receiving scarcely any income, they were often

brought into very strait places, from which there seemed no way of escape. Mr. L. sometimes thought he would be obliged to work with his hands, in order to obtain means for returning home, which he would have considered evidence that the LORD did not require his services, but such an expedient was never necessary. In their darkest hours Mary was sweetly cheered by the words of the psalmist, impressed upon her mind by the HOLY SPIRIT, the "darkness and the light to Thee are both alike." In every time of their extremity, deliverance was sure to come from some unexpected source; and afterwards, when recalling these events, M. remarked to her husband, that they could not point out a single instance where they had lacked any thing.

On one occasion they were obliged to wait in the depot nearly a whole day. After purchasing tickets for their destination, they had but a few pence left, part of which were spent in obtaining some simple refreshment. As Mary paced the room, partaking of her dry morsel, her heart overflowed with joy unspeakable, and, notwithstanding their destitute condition, she would not have exchanged her place for that of a queen. They arrived late at night, and after spending some time in fruitless search for lodgings, they were at last accommodated at the residence of a brother who, himself, had been somewhat engaged as an evangelist.

The next morning Mr. L. called on the preacher,

who informed him that his people were then in no condition to engage in special meetings, as there was a festival in contemplation. Alas for the church, when its members become so absorbed in worldly pleasure as to be unable to labor for the salvation of souls!— The inspired apostle describes this class as "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of GOD," and adds, "from such turn away." But some may say, "We are obliged to have recourse to such expedients, in order to obtain funds for the support of the Gospel." We would ask those who urge this plea, whether they would engage in these things for the good of CHRIST'S cause, alone, if they did not themselves enjoy them? We believe there is no such necessity. If pastor and people were consecrated to GOD, and possessed sufficient faith, the Gospel would be supported without resorting to such folly. If one possesses not a sufficient degree of the SAVIOUR'S love to satisfy the soul, without the enjoyment of worldly pleasure, there is something wrong which should be immediately righted; for "If any man love the world, the love of the FATHER is not in him."

This preacher recommended Mr. L. to a certain place some five miles distant, where he thought their services might be acceptable. He informed them that the church was in a sadly divided state, and added, "Nothing but a revival will save them." They had but little expectation of finding opportunity to work there; but, as this seemed their only alternative, they

resolved to make the trial. There was no mode of conveyance to this place, nor had they means to pay the expense of traveling if there had been. So, leaving their baggage in care of their host, and taking a small supply of clothing, sufficient for a few days, they set out on foot. They were informed of a brother who lived about half way between the two towns, who would probably take them to their place of destination.

When within a short distance of this brother's residence, they were overtaken by a gentleman who kindly invited them to ride. They declined, at first, and he passed on. He seemed loth to leave them, however, and looking back he said, "You can ride, if you wish." "How far is it to C.?" asked Mr. L., "About two and a half miles, and I am going directly there." "Are you acquainted with the preacher in the place?" said L., "Mr. J? O yes, very well; and I live only a fourth of a mile from his house." On learning this they gratefully accepted his invitation, and were soon at Mr. J.'s door. The bell was answered by his wife, a lady of very prepossessing exterior, and free and easy in her manners. She cordially invited them in, and conducted them to the sitting room, where a cheerful fire burned in the grate, and an air of comfort pervaded the place, inviting the weary ones to tarry. She called her husband, and their errand was at once made known. A brother's heart beat in the breast of this man of GOD. He seemed to discern, as if by intui-

tion, that these friends were laboring under some embarrassment; and, seating himself beside them, he inquired particularly of their circumstances, expressing, as the cause of his doing so, his earnest desire to render them any assistance in his power. Mr. L. hesitated; but Mary remarked to him that she felt perfectly free to comply with this request.

They therefore gave him a brief account of their adventures since leaving New England, their lack of success in finding extensive fields of labor, and informed him something of their present straitened condition. He listened to their story with deep interest: and when it was finished he said, "We are greatly in need of help, here, and have long been praying for it; and I am not sure but you are sent in answer to prayer. I cannot promise to employ you, however, until I have consulted the brethren. We are to have a meeting to-night, and will talk the matter over. And, now, make yourselves perfectly at home with us, for a few days, at least, and we will see what can be done."— The grateful emotions of his guests on hearing these words may be better imagined than described.

Weary with being whirled from place to place, and depressed and disheartened by the cold and half suspicious manner in which they had often been received, the privilege of rest and home with kind friends, even for a brief period, was timely and exceedingly refreshing. The brethren concluded to appoint some meetings, and these laborers were soon once more engaged

in their blessed work, and received some precious tokens of the Divine favor. "The things that were ready to die" were strengthened, and many souls felt the quickening and reviving influences of the HOLY GHOST. While they were engaged here, Dr. and Mrs. Palmer were holding meetings in a neighboring town, one of which, through the kindness of Mr. J., they were permitted to attend. A large congregation was present; and after the Dr. and his wife had spoken, opportunity was given for others; though there were so many to testify, that all were obliged to be very brief. Mary spoke a few words, but want of time prevented her from expressing what she desired, and she felt quite dissatisfied with her testimony. At the close of the services, she and her husband enjoyed the pleasure of an introduction to these distinguished servants of GOD. M. had become strongly attached to Mrs. P., through her works on holiness, and a thrill of sacred love and joy ran through her whole frame as her own hand and lips pressed those of this devoted saint. As they retired and gave place to others, Mary heard Mrs. P. say something to one with whom she was conversing, about coming out from the world; when she was seized with a sudden inspiration to sing a certain piece on this subject. Obeying what she believed to be a Divine impression, she sang as follows:—

'Tis strange how the follies and faults of the day
Have drawn from her primitive customs away,
The Church, with her banner of glory unfurled,

And this for her motto, "Come out from the world."
Time was when her children in simple array,
Thought little of fashion and less of display.
No plumes on their bonnets, nor trappings of gold
Which Wesley or Whitefield would blush to behold.
Come out from the world, for why should we fear?
Be firm, be true—come out from the world.

The rich and the humble together could meet;
Their music was plain and their voices were sweet.
The whole congregation together could raise
The hymn of thanksgiving, the anthem of praise.
Those time-honored customs have dwindled away;
Quartetts at a lavish expense we must pay.
The opera style has supplanted, at last,
Those hymns of devotion so loved in the past.

The seats in our places of worship were free,
Sad changes, alas! in the present we see;
For now they are rented at prices so high
The poor of the flock are unable to buy.
O! brethren, let conscience from slumber awake;
The fetters that bind us 'tis time we should break!
Come round the old banner of glory unfurled
With this for your motto, "Come out from the world."

When she ceased, a sister remarked, I believe the LORD sent you here on purpose to sing that piece. You do not know to whom you have been singing. A fashionably dressed church-mamber stood close by you all the while; she is the wife of a lawyer in the place, and is very proud and popular.

They remained in C. some three weeks, and, on leaving, received a sum of money, which, though but

a meagre return for their services, raised them so far above their past straitened circumstances, that they felt quite rich in its possession. Mary's love and fidelity to her Saviour was strongly tested during this season. She was for the most part, exceedingly homesick, and earnestly longed for her own dear New-England and the tried and faithful friends she had left there. Yet such was her attachment to her Redeemer and His work, that she would not have returned, if she might, until her mission here was accomplished.

To one who looks merely on outward appearances, it might seem that they had been misled in taking this tour; but her faith wavered not. Amid all their discouragements she firmly believed they were Divinely directed; and in times of most severe trial, was enabled to say from the heart, "Thy will be done." They found in the free Methodists an earnest and devoted people; they manifested a commendable zeal in enforcing discipline, which is so sadly wanting in the M. E. Church. In some instances, however, bigotry had crept in; and a certain class seemed to consider outward demonstrations, such as shouting, &c. tests of fellowship. This created some division, and the enemy thereby obtained an advantage. Many disaffected ones from the other churches had come among them, and they had suffered somewhat from the influence of imposture. This caused them to look with suspicion on strangers, evincing a lack of Christian charity which crushed and sorely wounded

those to whom it was manifested. Alas for poor human nature, unless completely and constantly pervaded by the sanctifying power of the HOLY GHOST!

Having finished their work in these parts, they returned to Vermont, happy in the thought that they had done what they could, and had not been driven back by the enemy in this campaign, but received an honorable discharge from their blessed Leader.

As Spring time approached Mr. L. began to make preparations for farming. We here insert an incident which, though trivial in itself, may serve as a proof of GOD'S willingness to direct His children, even in the most minute affairs of life. They were at this time with friends at V. where he was to leave his wife to finish her visit while he should attend to his business concerns. He desired to sow some grain on his land, but had not means to obtain it. Mary had a small sum which she had recently received for her labor, which he requested her to allow him to use for that purpose. Her money, as all else she possessed was consecrated to GOD, and she always prayed earnestly to be guided by Divine wisdom in using it. For some unknown cause she felt a decided reluctance to comply with his request, though glad to do so if it was the LORD'S will. On learning her feelings he refused to receive it; but perceiving that he seemed quite disappointed, she insisted that he should take it, which he finally did, and left her. She retired to her own room and laid the case before the LORD, request-

ing that if it were not best the money should be expended in this manner, He would in some way prevent it. Her mind was thus set quite at ease, and the circumstance soon forgotten. Several weeks afterwards, when next they met, her husband informed her, that on leaving her he went directly to —— contrary to his plans, to see his friend G. who desired him to remain and assist him a few days; for which services he repaid him with grain, such as he needed; and thus the money was saved. I thought, remarked Mr. L., in conclusion, this was really providential; and suspected you might have prayed about it. This recalled to Mary's mind the long forgotten incident, and her heart overflowed with gratitude to her heavenly Father for this new proof of His notice and care. We are aware that some do not recognize in such instances an over-ruling power, but attribute them solely to a blind chance. With Mary, however, nothing was too small to be made a subject of prayer; and the answer she received greatly strengthened her confidence, and afforded her indescribable comfort. We often hear it remarked, God's laws are unalterable; hence nothing can be affected by prayer. We do not contend that man can change the purposes of his Maker, but we do claim that "prayer is appointed to convey the blessings God designs to give." When there is perfect communication between the creature and the Creator, by a sweet and entire submission of the human to the Divine will, the Father inspires by

His Spirit, in his children, desires for those blessings which it is His pleasure to impart. Some may inquire whence this necessity, since the Almighty knows perfectly our needs; why may He not supply them without the asking? We answer, none will query thus who know the blessedness of communion with GOD. Infinite love is displayed on the part of the Creator, not only in His willingness to confer needed favors, but also in the exquisite enjoyment afforded by the unspeakable privilege of holding intercourse with Himself. Heaven pity those who never pray!

While her husband was employed on his farm Mary was visiting in the neighborhood and its vicinity. The words of another she found to be true in her own experience: "If you want a field of labor you can find it any where." Weekly meetings were holden at the district school-house, which she attended when in the place, and held forth the Word as she felt prompted by the HOLY SPIRIT. Wherever her lot was cast, it was the chief object of her life to assist those with whom she was associated, in the heavenward journey. In the ensuing Autumn they went forth once more to labor among strangers. After having traveled for some time under very discouraging circumstances, they went one Saturday morning, to a depot, in a certain place in Massachusetts, undecided what to do. After some deliberation, Mr. L. informed his wife that he intended to go to Connecticut. Poor Mary! her heart sank within her. They had never traveled in that State;

and, weary and disheartened as she was, her feelings shrank from taking this course. Past experience, however, had convinced her that her husband's impressions were of the LORD, and she dared not gainsay it. They took the next train for the town of T., and arriving late in the evening, repaired to the hotel. The return of morning brought the sweet sunshine of GOD'S love anew to Mary's drooping heart. They attended church, where they enjoyed the privilege of commemorating the death of our blessed LORD. As she partook of the sacred emblems, her soul was overflowed with the joys of her Saviour's presence, notwithstanding their dark and trying circumstances—"not a cloud did arise to darken her skies." At the close of the services, the pastor came forward, and shaking them cordially by the hand, asked, "do you not preach?" My wife and myself are engaged in laboring for the LORD, replied Mr. L. "And will you take charge of a meeting here this evening?" said the pastor; if Providence permit, he answered. The appointment was accordingly given; though in consequence of the small number present, they feared it would not be extensively circulated. Contrary to their expectations however, a large congregation assembled, whom M. addressed on her favorite theme—the doctrine and experience of holiness. Her hearers paid strict attention, and seemed deeply interested.

On returning to their lodgings she enjoyed a long talk with the landlady, in which her own soul was

greatly blessed—her hostess also seemed much affected. The next morning they were visited by some official members of the church, with a view of inviting them to remain awhile. They were, for the most part, desirous to avail themselves of their services ; but one more cautious than the rest, hestitated, wishing more time to decide the matter. Their limited means would not allow their remaining where they were, and none invited them to their homes. They therefore left town that day ; though appearances indicated that great good might have been accomplished had they employed them. Thus commenced and ended their labors in Connecticut.

During this season, after an absence of four years, Mary was permitted, in company with her husband, to visit once more the place of her birth, Georgetown, Mass. Their stay in this vicinity occupied several weeks ; and was both pleasant and profitable. They received everywhere abundant proof of the affectionate regard entertained for her by friends of long ago. They also enjoyed the privilege of preaching the Word, to the acceptance of the people ; nor were those to whom they ministered, negligent in supplying their temporal needs. It seemed that Mary was not without honor, even in her own country and among her own kin. Many are inclined to judge of the efficiency and success of their own and others efforts by the immediate, apparent results. Nothing more clearly exhibits the fallibility of finite judgment.

God's work is often beyond the sight of man, and the seed sown does not in every case spring up at once; yet the sure word of promise is, "in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

Soon after their marriage, before starting on their first tour, Mr. L. remarked to his wife, that he hoped they should see sweeping revivals as the fruits of their labor. A sort of prophetic view was suddenly presented to her mind, and she replied, that we shall not see; here and there one will be converted, and a few wholly sanctified, but the sweeping work we shall not realize. Perhaps it was partly from this cause that her faith failed not amid their manifold discouragements. During all their labors and travels, she continued firm in the belief that they were Divinely led; whereas, had she judged from the outward appearance she would often have been distressed by doubt and perplexity. She acknowledged God in all her ways; trusted His promise to direct her paths, and then, however dark and mysterious seemed the way, she held with a firm and childlike confidence, the hand of her dear Redeemer, and moved steadily forward, in the assurance that all would be well.

CHAPTER XIII.

DOMESTIC LIFE AND MISCELLANEOUS INCIDENTS.

IN the foregoing chapter, we have glanced briefly over the three first years of Mary's married life. These years, perhaps, had been blessed with more of sunshine than ordinarily gladdens the conjugal relation. That natural lack of congeniality, which, in the absence of grace, might have produced disturbance and even discord, was sweetly supplied by a perfect union in CHRIST, and peace and harmony characterized their life, as a consequence. The greatest trial resulting from their marriage, was occasioned by temporal affairs. Her husband's liabilities greatly annoyed and perplexed her. She had ever felt that he ought to dispose of his worldly possessions, and had advised and strongly urged him to do so. But as it seemed this could not be done without considerable sacrifice, he did not consider it duty to follow her counsel. Believing it not right that what GOD had given them should be wasted, and finding no one to take care of their farm, they had of late contemplated the idea of housekeeping; especially as they felt

the need of a little rest from vineyard labor during the Summer season. Besides these considerations, Mary hoped, that if prospered, they might be able to free themselves from the trying incumbrance of debt, which she felt would not only afford a great relief to her own mind, but would also be pleasing to the LORD.

During the previous Summer, she had spent two days with her husband in their own house. On one of those mornings, while alone in prayer, the power of GOD came upon her in a remarkable manner, and she was led to make a special consecration of their dwelling and land to the LORD, and earnestly to pray that whether occupied by themselves or others, both it and its occupants might be His alone. Sometime afterward, an ungodly person came to Mr. L. to know the conditions on which he would sell. On learning his terms, he spoke quite favorably of purchasing, but did not decide to do so immediately. Mary felt that this was not in the Divine order, and would not succeed, and thus it proved.

She had long entertained the opinion, that those who are called to preach the Gospel should not engage in secular pursuits, yet the leadings of Providence were gradually modifying her views in this respect, in regard to their own case, for the present, at least. As was their wont, they took this subject to the Throne of Grace, with earnest desire that if their plans were not in keeping with GOD'S will, they might not prosper.

Mary had sometimes sad misgivings as to her ability to manage domestic affairs, in consequence of her infirmity. She was much interested in household matters, and had taken pains, from time to time, to inform herself in regard to these things, yet was totally wanting in experience. Notwithstanding these misgivings, there were seasons when she felt quite confident of success. And as time passed on and circumstances seemed to favor the undertaking, she looked forward with pleasing anticipation to the period when they should be quietly settled in their own home. Yet how seldom in this life do we realize the pleasure we anticipate! Though deprived of sight, one of the dearest and sweetest of earthly blessings, Mary was surrounded with many enjoyments calculated to render life attractive and cheerful. Wherever her roving steps were directed, her pathway, which otherwise might have been rough and thorny, was sweetly smoothed by the sympathy of dear, kind friends, and strewed with flowers, whose fragrance shed a sweetness o'er life's darkest hours. Even from her infancy, every means was employed, which tender affection could devise, to counteract the peculiar difficulties arising from her infirmity; nor did her neighbors form any exception to this general rule. When about to enter upon domestic life, they kindly volunteered to put her house in order, and thus relieve her from all care in this respect. The day was far spent when the finishing touches were given. An unpleas-

ant, dreary day it was, though late in the Spring, and an uncomfortable storm of snow was falling when M., conducted by her husband, arrived at night, just as the last neighbor was leaving the house.

Those accustomed to the comforts, or even the bare necessities of life, will be at no loss to account for her feelings on entering their humble abode.

The dwelling, which for several years had remained unoccupied, was in a somewhat dilapidated condition ; no time as yet having been found for making the requisite repairs. The chilly wind with its unwelcome breath, stole drearily in, imparting an air of cheerless discomfort quite unbefitting to a place called home. The amount of furniture afforded by their limited means would have been considered by most housekeepers, totally inadequate to meet the demands of absolute necessity. To this small supply, had been added a few second hand articles by the charity of friends. Their bed, for the time being, was laid upon the floor ; and everything wore that unsettled aspect, which to Mary was always peculiarly unpleasant. Thus straitened in circumstances and destitute of sight, at the comparatively advanced age of forty years left with the whole care of household affairs, it is not strange that her prospects seemed dark and forbidding. An accident, soon after their arrival, deprived them of their only lamp ; in consequence of which, Mr. L. was obliged to leave her and go to a neighbor's in quest of candles.

As she sat during his absence, in her lonely apartment, gently swaying to and fro in a broken rocking chair, contemplating her forlorn condition, a feeling of desolate heart sickness stole over her, which contrasted strangely with her former bright anticipations of domestic life. Not one of the many warm hearts, which had so fondly cherished her in the past, were aware of the sad emotions which were now crushing her spirit. The multitude of loving hands which had so often ministered to her wants, were far away, and the sweet voices whose tender words of sympathy had so frequently comforted her, were now silenced by absence. Yet there were eyes that looked upon her as she sat there alone in the darkness, eyes of tender pity from above ; and their was a friend near at hand, who regarded her with a love, compared with which that of the truest earthly friend is but faint and cold. One on whom though unseen she could cast all her care ; firmly trusting, even in the absence of every outward sign, that he still cared for her. Gradually, with the help of her husband's kind and willing hands in executing her plans, things were properly arranged ; and their humble dwelling really began to assume a homelike appearance. The dreary storm also passed away, and the bright spring sunshine lent its cheering beams to gladden the place. With this agreeable change, came a corresponding one in her feelings. Her despondency vanished, and her naturally cheerful frame of mind was fully restored As she became

more and more settled, and familiar with her new surroundings, she longed to try her skill in the culinary department. But this pleasure was sometime deferred in consequence of their having been previously supplied by their kind neighbors, with a store of provisions sufficient for several days. Her first attempt in this direction was at bread making. Even this trifling affair was not undertaken without prayer. Her lack of experience seemed to render it impossible that she should succeed without help, and as no human aid was available, she must needs resort to the LORD.

She watched with intense interest the rising process, by gently applying her fingers from time to time in order to ascertain whether the dough was light. It did come up at last, though so slowly that she became almost discouraged. She also succeeded admirably in the baking, and in due time, took from the oven with her own hands her bread which would have compared very favorably with that prepared by those possessed of perfect sight and long experience.

The facility with which she accomplished her work was truly wonderful, both to her neighbors and herself. Being naturally very cautious, and blessed with a remarkable memory, which had been greatly strengthened by constant exercise, she allowed nothing to be spoiled or wasted through forgetfulness or carelessness. Though highly gratified with her success in this new enterprise, she was ever mindful of the fact that she had nothing but what she had received and ascribed

the praise for this, as for all her blessings, alone to her GOD. Her husband, though not skilled in planning or executing household matters, was ever ready with hands and eyes, to render needed assistance. Her neighbors improved the earliest opportunities of calling on her, and won her love immediately, by their many expressions of kindness and sympathy. But though she loved them all, there were some whose nature and spirit were peculiarly congenial with her own. Especially was this the case with one Mrs. S., toward whom she was at first strongly attracted by her testimony in social meeting. She enjoyed but a limited degree of Christian experience; having been converted only a few weeks before. She possessed a mind of more than ordinary intelligence; was free and easy in her manners, and like Mary, social and confiding in her disposition. A warm and intimate attachment sprang up between them, which continued to increase as they become more acquainted.

We have not time nor space to describe minutely all their neighbors, and their good and noble qualities. Suffice it to say, that she thoroughly appreciated every one, and it was her most earnest desire to make returns for their many temporal favors, by doing all in her power to advance their spiritual welfare. This desire was manifested by public effort at the weekly meetings, which continued to be holden at the schoolhouse before mentioned. The state of things in the religious department was now very different from for-

merly. Only a few years before, there was a commodious house of worship in the place, where the Gospel was regularly preached. But on account of changes produced by death, removals &c., the house had for some time been deserted; and the land upon which it stood having fallen into unfriendly hands, it was, at last, destroyed. Some who are most active in sustaining meetings, felt it not necessary to support preaching; but believed an equal amount of good might be accomplished by the use of the social means of grace alone.

Mr. L. had, in years past, been instrumental in a precious revival in the neighborhood; but from the above named, and other causes, felt at that time that he had there no special mission. Mary, however, was greatly burdened for that people, and was ever present at the place of worship, ready to obey her Divine Master, whether by prayer, preaching or exhortation. She often addressed the congregation with great freedom and tender earnestness.

Frequently, in the past, when urging upon her own sex the importance of a life fully consecrated to GOD, she was met with the assertion, that, had she the cares of a housewife, she could not, herself, live in that state: that it was impossible for those beset with the many trials incident to domestic life, to possess that degree of piety enjoyed by those who preach the gospel. Yet she entertained and expressed the belief that GOD'S grace is sufficient for all, under all circumstances, and

was often heard to remark, that one might be as holy while at the kneading-board or wash-tub, if following their proper calling, as others who are appointed to occupy the sacred desk. She had now ample opportunity to test the truth of this idea ; and often while about her work the query was presented to her mind, whether she could substantiate it by her own experience. Certain it was, that she was called to endure a class of trials and temptations before unknown to her. Unskilled, as she was, in the management of domestic affairs, it was at times necessary that her mind should be wholly absorbed in these things. If a neighbor came in, present necessity called forth enquiries as to how she should do this or that piece of work, instead of the all-important question which had hitherto been uppermost when meeting a friend, namely, How is your soul prospering ? &c. When she sat down to rest, her mind was constantly reviewing what she had done, or planning for the future, and she was frequently obliged to take her Bible (when so weary as to feel unable to read) in order to concentrate her thoughts, as she desired, on spiritual things. This was, indeed, a great and unwelcome change. She had felt, in the past, that she would rather die than take one backward step ; yet the idea was constantly suggested to her mind, that she was backsliding, or at least, measurably losing her spirituality. She informed her husband of her feelings, desiring to know his opinion in regard to her case.

He replied, "If you were really backsliding, I think you would not realize, or be so much troubled about it." She examined and re-examined her consecration, but could find no defect here. Indeed, it would seem impossible that there should be any lack in that direction, as her first act, each day, was renewedly to surrender herself and her all to CHRIST. She then endeavored to test her faith, and felt that she had, as ever, a firm trust in her SAVIOUR. She detected the work of the enemy, however, in causing her to look at herself, and dwell upon her peculiar feelings, and thus inducing her gradually to withdraw her eye of faith from JESUS. She also felt that she might have been in danger of being imperceptibly overcome by a sort of spiritual pride, which would lead her to look with undue complacency upon her own attainments.

But there was one particular in which she was fortified against her wily foe. She had for years been in the habit of observing stated seasons for secret prayer; which she felt had greatly strengthened and helped her in her Christian course. Before entering on her present mode of life she had resolved to maintain this habit, in spite of opposing circumstances; and this resolution she had generally kept. True, these seasons were sometimes necessarily very brief; yet the observance of this rule had a tendency to keep her mind stayed on GOD, amid the distracting influences by which she was surrounded.

During the Summer they were visited by a beloved

brother and sister in CHRIST, residing in the town of V———. To these valued friends Mary confided her peculiar exercises. As she concluded the tale of her temptations and troubled feelings, the sister laughed heartily, and exclaimed, "I am glad of it, Matie, I am glad of it. You now know how to sympathize with me, and others in a similar condition; whereas you would never before believe that temporal cares need to influence ene in the least." The conversation was long continued, but was not productive of much comfort to M. They had once tasted the blessing of perfect love, but on account of severe trials, had dropped the profession of it as a specialty; and they now intimated that she would also be obliged to do so.—This she felt could never be. The very thought of it almost broke her heart, and drew bitter tears from her eyes. Notwithstanding her varied temptations and conflicting emotions, she continued steadily to maintain the position that the blood of JESUS CHRIST cleansed her from all sin; testifying to the same, whenever opportunity was afforded. She hereby obtained a victory and power which she could not otherwise have gained. If she yielded, for a moment, on any point, she hastened at once to the cleansing fountain, and washed, by faith, in the healing flood, and peace and tranquility were immediately restored.

The following autumn they attended camp-meeting in Massachusetts. As she sat in the tent, soon after their arrival, reviewing the experiences of the

past Summer, she received a sweet assurance that her trouble was all groundless: that she had not backslidden in the least, but Satan had been busily endeavoring to distress and annoy her.

Let the reader learn a lesson from Mary's experience; and not deem it necessary that the thoughts should be constantly fixed on heavenly things, in order to enjoy full salvation. We do not suppose those who dearly love their family must needs be thinking of them every moment. Business affairs sometimes demand their whole attention, yet in all they do, they seek the good of their loved ones. So with those who love the LORD with all the heart: though the mind must often, for a time, be wholly occupied with temporal things, yet it is their constant aim to please Him whom they love. Those thus united to CHRIST, have no other object, whatever their occupation or feelings, but to glorify GOD, in whatever they do.

As the summer passed away, M. began to feel uneasy; household duties became distasteful and irksome, and she hailed with joy the day that released her from these cares and perplexities, and left her at liberty once more to engage wholly in laboring for the salvation of souls. But after spending the Winter in this manner, her strength became exhausted, and the return to their quiet home the ensuing Spring brought a welcome change and rest. One day a few weeks after their return, as her husband came in to dinner,

she had a surprise for him ; for which cause she had been for sometime impatiently awaiting his coming. This day was the fourth anniversary of their marriage, and she thought she would like to compose a poem for the occasion. But her faculty in this direction had so long lain dormant, that she supposed it had become quite extinct. While about her morning work, however, the numbers flowed into her mind as if by inspiration ; and long before her husband came home, her poem was completed. As he threw himself upon the couch after dinner for his accustomed rest, she informed him that she had some verses she would like to have him hear.

He signified his willingness to listen, and she proceeded as follows.

LINES TO MY HUSBAND, ON THE FOURTH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR WEDDING, JUNE 4, 1872.

1. 'Tis just four years to day, dear,
   Since you and I were wed.
   How rapid and how happily
   Those blessed years have sped !
   For, heart and hand united
   In the service of our GOD,
   In joy and peace and harmony
   The heavenward road we've trod.

2. When we were first acquainted
   My heart was light and free.
   Weaned from the world's attractions,
   CHRIST was all in all to me.

But worldly cares have multiplied
Around my path since then ;
And still I find His precious blood
Doth cleanse me from all sin.

3. And you, too, know its power :
The consecration made
In those blessed, hallowed moments,
Is, by the SPIRIT'S aid,
Still kept in its completeness
Through all your trials sore ;
And to day it is your purpose
To keep it evermore.

4. Though pressed with toil and business,
It is our constant aim,
In all we do and all we say,
To glorify His name.
Why should we not be happy, then ?
Why should we not be free ?
A King and Queen upon the throne
Might envy you and me.

5. I once was lone and homeless ;
A wanderer to and fro ;
And thinking thus I should remain
While I sojourned below.
But, Father, in his wisdom,
Saw fit this should not be ;
A home and a companion
He kindly gave to me.

6. 'Tis true, our home is humble ;
But peace and quiet reign
Within our lowly dwelling ;
"O, may they e'er remain."

And every needed worldly good
To us is richly given,
With bright anticipations
Of a better home in heaven.

7. All praise and adoration
To Thee, Most Holy One,
Who said'st thyself, "It is not good
That man should be alone,"
And mad'st for him an "helpmeet.
Directing in Thy word
That they should dwell together,
Bound by this mystic cord.

8. We give to Thee the glory
And the praise for every good
For precious, social earthly ties,
And ties that bind to God.
Yes, to Thee we'll give the glory
In our eternal home,
And shout aloud Thy praises
In the blessed world to come.

9. My feelings sometimes tell me
That I must shortly go.
Infirmities admonish me
I can't stay long below.
But if I soon must leave you,
You will not be alone;
For JESUS will be with you
Until your journey's done.

10 And then we'll be united
With the happy throng above.
Far beyond the reach of sorrow,
Where all is joy and love.

"Where they shall neither marry
Nor given in marriage be,"
"But be equal to the angels"
In all eternity.

It was but natural that Mary should have desired and expected some expression of her husband's feelings on hearing this production; but not a word did he utter. This greatly tried and disappointed her; the sentiment contained in the piece was the out-gushing of a warm and loving heart; and meeting no outward response, her feelings were crushed and deeply wounded. She at first felt an inclination to ask him what he thought of it; but she said to herself, no: if he is not sufficiently interested to make any comment, I will not question him about it, and so nothing was said by either on the subject at that time. It is often the case that persons are grieved and tried with the conduct of their friends, simply because they do not understand them, and thus it was with M.

There was in her husband's nature, a vein of tenderness, which, during all their acquaintance she had not discovered.

The next day, she made some casual allusion to the poem, when he remarked with much earnestness, I must copy that, I believe there is inspiration in it. He then referred to her impression in regard to the brevity of her life, expressed in the ninth verse; when suddenly the truth flashed upon her mind as to the cause of his utter silence which had so troubled her

the day before. He now acknowledged in answer to her inquires that he was so overcome by his emotions, that he dared not trust himself to speak.

The Summer passed rapidly and pleasantly. The neighbors who at first manifested so deep an interest in her welfare, continued to give abundant proofs of increasing love and kind feeling. They never visited her without bringing substantial evidence of the fact that they were mindful and considerate of her infirmity. They would not make her the least trouble, as they felt that her burdens already were greater than she was able to bear. Though truly grateful for their kindness and consideration, she was often made sad by the thought that she could not have the pleasure of entertaining as well as receiving her friends. Naturally social and liberal in her disposition, she enjoyed company exceedingly ; and it was her delight to do all in her power for the comfort and enjoyment of her guests.

But these kind friends not only provided for, and waited upon themselves while visiting her, but also rendered her valuable assistance in sewing, mending, &c., which it was impossible for her to do.

During this season Mary was quite free from those harrassing suggestions about backsliding and losing her spirituality which had so annoyed her the previous Summer.

The reader may form some idea of her frame of mind from the following lines composed one day in

the early Autumn while busily engaged with household duties.

REST IN JESUS.

JESUS blesses, JESUS saves.
All the good my being craves
In Him richly do I find,
For the body and the mind.
JESUS is my only hope,
JESUS lifts my spirit up
Far above earth's care and fear;
Brings the heavenly city near.

JESUS, on Thy gentle breast
May I ever sweetly rest;
Rest in time and rest with Thee
In the bright eternity.
Blessed rest! this rest of faith.
Rest from doubt and fear of death;
Rest from condemnation too;
Sweetest joy man ever knew.

Let me but enjoy this rest,
Then I am supremely blest
In the sunshine or the storm;
All He's promised He'll perform.
JESUS, Thou art wholly mine.
JESUS I am wholly Thine;
Walking ever by Thy side,
Washed and saved and sanctified.

They attended camp meeting in Mass., where they had been the preceding year. In addition to spiritual blessings, Mary received in temporal things a proof of the truth of the proverb, "there is that scat-

tereth and yet increaseth." She met at that meeting a sister in CHRIST, who had been greatly blessed through her instrumentality the year before. As they sat conversing together in the tent this sister inquired particularly as to their circumstances, and said, I feel that you have been the means of great benefit to me, and I wish to make you a small present if you will accept it; and she placed in her hand a small sum of money.

Mary soon left that tent with her husband and went to another in search of some friends. Not finding them however, Mr. L. seated his wife and stepped out. A gentleman and lady sat near her engaged in earnest conversation. The lady was speaking of the freedom of feeling and intimate communion with GOD, which she had enjoyed while at her home, but said she felt very differently since coming to this meeting: that she had no liberty in prayer, and no spirit of labor; and she could not understand why it was so. The gentleman did not reply; and Mary, who was deeply interested in the remarks of the sister, said, we cannot always account for those things. Upon this, the lady came and seated herself beside her and a long conversation followed; from which M. learned that she was a young widow with three small children, and wholly dependent upon her own exertions for their support. She felt a strong impulse to give her the money she had just received, which was all she had, but as her husband had often told

her she was too liberal, and ought sometimes to restrain her feelings in that direction, she resolved not to act immediately from that impulse, but seek for guidance from the LORD. She therefore kept lifting her heart in prayer as they continued to converse and as she did so, her first impression grew stronger until she finally yielded. The sister seemed very grateful, both to GOD and her friend for this favor.

She soon left the tent, and as Mary sat alone, absorbed in her own reflections, a feeling of regret came over her at what she had done, accompanied by the suggestion that she ought to have kept her money as her husband's means were so limited, and it would have helped her to some little things which were needful for her comfort. But as usual faith came to her relief, and she reasoned thus. I have done what I believe to be my duty, and have done it "heartily as unto the LORD." He knows my needs, and is both able and willing to supply them. This assurance brought peace and comfort to her mind, and the subject was at once dismissed.

The next day, another sister whom she had formerly met, sought and obtained an interview with her; and on leaving presented her with a sum of money just equal to that she had given away on the preceding day. Soon after a former acquaintance handed her a trifle, and the following day the widowed sister came to her again informing her that she could not keep what she had given her. Mary urged her to do

so, but in vain. She said that in consideration of her infirmity, and her position as laborer in the LORD'S vineyard she could not conscientiously retain it.

At the close of the camp meeting, as the people were preparing to disperse, the master of the tent which Mr. and Mrs. L., occupied requested them to sing one of their hymns, which was a special favorite with him. When they ceased singing, M. received a contribution from those who stood by, which, together with the presents above mentioned, increased the sum she had lent to the LORD, more than fourfold. Thus she found as in all cases in her former experience, that nothing was lost which was invested in this manner with a pure motive. Some incidents connected with their labors the ensuing Winter, are worthy of notice here.

At one time they received intelligence that a certain preacher with whom they had formerly a slight acquaintance, who was then laboring at——was very desirous that they should come to that place. As they were entire strangers there, and he resided in another town, they thought it best to proceed first to his residence; and thence with him to——,and be introduced by him to his people. This plan they carried out, but had at first some cause to fear they had made a mistake. They met with a cool reception from the preacher, for which they were at loss to account. This was soon explained however, by his expressing the wish that they had gone directly to——

instead of coming there, as he knew of no mode of conveyance for them to that place. He said the roads were bad, and he had no vehicle suitable to carry them and their baggage. He and his wife had an engagement abroad that evening; and therefore must dispose of their guests in some way. He informed them that the brother who preached at the village near his residence, would, no doubt, be very glad to see them; that he would take them to his house, and their things could remain for the present where they were.

They had never met this brother, and not knowing how he would receive them, they were not at all pleased with the arrangement; but as there seemed to be no other alternative, they consented to it. Here they found a brother indeed, to whose warm heart and comfortable home they were most cordially welcomed. They had no idea by what means they should reach ——, and felt some uneasiness in regard to it; but their kind host bade them make themselves perfectly at home with him, until an opening should present itself.

Two days after their arrival, the preacher above mentioned made his appearance, bringing their baggage. He was on his way to his appointment, and said he would inform his people of them and their whereabouts; and should they desire their services, they would probably send for them. He accordingly presented the case before the meeting that evening.

The people were favorably impressed with his description of these laborers, and the next morning one of the brethren came for them and took them to his own house, where they found one of the best and most pleasant homes they had ever enjoyed. The family were all professing Christians. One of the daughters had recently married a son of the pastor, and, with her husband, boarded at home. The youngest daughter was converted the evening preceding their arrival. The former was an invalid, and Mary soon found an opportunity of conversing with her on the subject of holiness. She found in her an eager and interested listener, who soon sought and obtained the blessing.

In her husband, also, M. felt a deep interest. He had recently been reclaimed from a backslidden state, and was a firm believer in the doctrine of entire sanctification; but when the subject was pressed home, he manifested a decided aversion to seeking its experience immediately. As she continued laboring with him, however, the Spirit of the LORD took a mighty hold upon him, and he resolved to endeavor to make the requisite consecration. Reluctant as he had hitherto been to take this step, he found on making the attempt, that it was even more difficult than he had anticipated. He expressed to M. that it was almost equal to death to yield upon some points. But grace finally conquered, and he was enabled to make a complete surrender, though he did not receive the

assurance of acceptance which he desired. Their family prayer-meetings were characterized by remarkable manifestations of the power of GOD. In these exercises they were sometimes joined by others—among whom was a minister residing in the place, who preached alternately with the one before alluded to. He had been for years in a state of despondency nearly approaching to despair. He seemed greatly to enjoy conversing with M., who earnestly endeavored to persuade and encourage him to exercise faith in the blessed Saviour, and thereby to receive light and comfort; nor was she wholly unsuccessful.

One day, about this time, as they were anticipating one of these blessed prayer-meetings in the evening, their pastor came in. He brought with him a chilling influence, which was keenly felt by all, and which Mary feared might be an injury to his son and daughter-in-law. They seemed also aware of their danger; for, immediately after his arrival, they retired to their own room, and there fortified themselves by prayer against this unhallowed influence. He had once enjoyed the precious blessing they had just been seeking, but did not now definitely profess it. Indeed he seemed to think that those who did so, and strongly urged it upon others as a special necessity, occupied rather a dangerous position. Their hostess strongly believed in the doctrine, and boldly defended it, though she did not enjoy the experience. A warm discussion took place between her and her pastor, the spirit of

which, on her part, was not much in keeping with her love of the theory.

He remained there during the night, and of course was present in their meeting. When he and one or two more had prayed, he arose from his knees and commenced singing a hymn. The rest, however, with one exception, remained kneeling; and when he had finished the stanza, the praying was continued, and a blessed, melting season it was. The son of the pastor received a great blessing, but was not fully satisfied.

After prayers music was proposed. Mary seated herself at the melodeon, and all who were able joined in spiritual songs. As they ceased singing, and M. arose from the instrument, the youngest daughter cried out in alarm. "O! what is the matter! he is fainting!" She alluded to her brother-in-law, who was now deathly pale, and just about to fall; but Mr. L. caught him and seated him upon the couch. It was not a fainting-fit, however, but the effect of the power of GOD upon him. He shouted and wept, by turns, for some time; and when his emotion had somewhat subsided, he said to his father that he would like to relate to him his experience—which he did with great earnestness and many tears. He referred to his backslidings, his late return to the LORD—his interest in the subject of holiness—the consecration he had recently made to CHRIST, and the wonderful manifestation of His presence and favor he had just received. During the whole recital his father manifest-

ed great uneasiness; and when it was concluded made some remarks not at all calculated to strengthen or encourage him in his present position. Yet he seemed undaunted, and exhibited no other than a Christian spirit: but his mother-in-law was highly indignant at his father's remarks, and replied sharply to the same.

He was a very able and acceptable preacher, and generally beloved by his people; yet the statement of CHRIST, relative to some of His disciples, might have been applicable to him, with many others: "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of."

They labored for some time in that place, and their plain and pointed preaching on inward and outward holiness, separation from the world in dress, habits, &c., caused quite a sensation among the people. Some strongly affirmed that such preaching was too strong meat for babes, and manifested great fears that the cause of CHRIST would suffer in consequence. The two young daughters of their host were much affected by their plain dealing in private conversation, as well as their public labors. They were naturally proud, and, like most young persons, easily allured by the fashions and follies of the world; and the idea that these things must be wholly renounced, in order to follow JESUS, was to them exceedingly distasteful. The youngest had a strong aversion to praying vocally, in the presence of others, on account of a fancied lack of talent. But at times, when the presence and

power of the LORD were remarkably manifest, her proud heart melted beneath the influence, and she would open her mouth in humble, contrite prayer. She was really gifted in this direction, and her brokenness of spirit and child-like simplicity rendered her gift deeply interesting and affecting. Had she kept humble, she might have been a mighty instrument of good.

Her other sister had been for some years a professed follower of CHRIST, and at times was much exercised on the subject of entire sanctification. At these blessed seasons of family devotions she was often powerfully wrought upon by the HOLY SPIRIT; and, crying mightily to GOD for help, seemed almost to grasp the blessing; yet she did not fully yield, and therefore could not obtain it.

It is in vain to ask or expect divine aid, while refusing to submit to the will of GOD. While in this place they received a proof that the love of CHRIST will break down the middle walls of partition between His followers, and make void Church rules which are founded merely on outward observances.

They visited, by special invitation, a Baptist family. The brother was one of the deacons, who with his wife, had some experience in the deep things of GOD. The day following their arrival in the family was their communion season. Mr. and Mrs. L. were present at the meeting; and Mary was inclined to leave after the preaching, as she did not care to be present

during this precious exercise, and not be allowed to participate in it; but as her husband was disposed to remain, she consented to do so. They occupied the deacon's slip, which was remote from the desk, and, supposing the communicants would go forward, M. did not remove. Her husband, however, took another seat. They did go forward, as she anticipated—but the deacon's wife retained her place beside Mary. As her husband passed to her the bread and wine, she said to him, in a whisper, pass it to sister L. which he did. Mary hesitated; but the sister took her hand and placed it on the plate and cup—thus, as it were, compelling her to partake.

When they returned home M. remarked to her hostess that she did not expect to have the pleasure of communing with them. She replied, I intended you should. It might have been better that she should abide by the rules of the church, so long as she remained in it; yet the love she bore to her Saviour and this His ambassador, would not allow her to do so. They gained many warm friends in that place among both denominations, who, when they left, bade them farewell with deep regret. The two sisters above alluded to, subsequently at a camp-meeting, received the blessing of perfect love, and gave great promise of usefulness. Their brother-in-law decided to preach the gospel, and at last accounts was about preparing himself for that important work. One of the strongest elements in Mary's character was her

ambition. A phrenologist once remarked to her that, if blessed with sight, she would be calculated to push ahead in some direction. Indeed it was one of the greatest trials consequent upon her infirmity, that her usefulness and activity were necessarily so limited and crippled.

When at home, and not specially employed in the work of her divine Master, she greatly desired to engage in some business whereby she could provide for her needs, and assist her husband in his temporal affairs. Yet never, since occupying her present position in the vineyard of the LORD, had she felt at liberty to follow her former avocations, either as public singer or teacher. More recently she had been contemplating the idea of giving a few sacred concerts—thinking this would not only be a benefit to themselves, but might also exert an influence for good over others. She made it a subject of prayer; yet felt no freedom to move in that direction, until the following Spring. At that time, while visiting her sister-in-law at H., she resolved to make the trial—feeling that she might determine the will of GOD concerning her, in this respect, by the degree of success that should attend her efforts. All things worked favorably in regard to the preliminary arrangements, and the prospect seemed very flattering, so that she began to count, as she supposed with considerable certainty, on a good degree of prosperity. About this time she took a severe cold, in consequence of which her vocal organs were much im-

paired, and remained so, even after the general *effects* of the distemper had passed away. As she very seldom experienced the least inconvenience in this respect, she had no fear but all would be right at the time of the concert. The day on which it was appointed was stormy, and the rain continued to fall nearly all the evening. As the incidental expenses were very trifling, she had no doubt, even under the unfavorable circumstances, that she should realize at least a sum sufficient to defray them. Yet here she was doomed to disappointment, for the number present was hardly worth mentioning. The case was rendered still more embarrassing by the fact, that she was wholly dependent on the receipts of the evening for the means of paying the bills. Mr. L. was disheartened, perplexed and chagrined. He could see no way of escape from this disagreeable dilemma. Unaccustomed, as he was, to this sort of public life, the mode of advertising, &c., it appeared to him that she had made a great and almost unnecessary display ; and meeting with this failure, imparted a severe shock to his reputation. Mary, however, was calm and trustful—feeling sure that in some way the LORD would provide. It was thought best that she should sing a few pieces for the benefit of those who had taken the trouble to come out and hear her ; and she did so. At the conclusion of the entertainment, after thanking her audience for patronage, attention, &c., she addressed them substantially as follows: "We have met this evening under apparently

unfavorable circumstances. Having a desire to provide, by my own exertions, for my present necessities, and being wholly dependent on music as a means of doing so, I have advertised this concert. In consequence of the storm it has proved a failure—yet I am perfectly satisfied. My GOD in whom I trust knows what is best for me, and I wish for nothing that He does not see fit to bestow. O, it is indescribably sweet to confide in such a friend as I find in my blessed Saviour, and I would earnestly and cheerfully recommend this best of friends to all around me." The gentlemen who owned the hall and tended the door for her kindly gave her rent and services, so that she suffered no loss; which was great relief to the feellings of her husband. After they started on their journey home the storm subsided, and just as they arrived at their destination, the moon shone out bright and clear, as though no cloud had ever dimmed its radiance.

It may appear to some like superstition, but these indications were to Mary an unmistakeble expression of her Father's will in relation to her following this business. The next morning when she awoke, a feeling of sadness stole over her at the thought that she must be denied the privilege she had so much desired, and for a moment she was unable to suppress her tears; yet grace soon conquered, and its triumph found sweet expression in the blessed words, "thy will be done." Thinking this was not a fair trial, her

friends advised her to make one more attempt; but she firmly refused to do so, being fully satisfied in her own mind that it was not duty. An additional proof of this was contained in a fact we had forgotten to mention in relation to her voice. Though having at that time no appearance of cold, her vocal organs seemed sadly disordered, and she was unable to control them as she was wont. This difficulty was not observable after the concert was over. It was about this time that she composed the following pieces, which illustrate the happy state of her mind.

THOUGHTS OF HEAVEN.

My life "as a vapor" appears for a day;
But like night's waning taper, soon fadeth away.
Its moments so fleeting, will quickly be past;
And then comes the meeting so glorious at last.

The meeting where sorrow and sighing shall cease
In the bright, glad to-morrow of rapture and peace;
The meeting with dear friends who've passed on before;
The meeting where grief ends, on heaven's bright shore.

My mother, my father, my loved ones are gone;
But with them I shall gather when life's dream is flown.
With them and the bright throng, the pure and the blest,
Who join in the new song; forever at rest.

This body, so frail, must lie down in the grave.
Heart and flesh soon must fail; but "the mighty to save"
From heaven descending, the dead shall awake;
And death's conquests ending, his fetters He'll break.

O! the joy and the glory awaiting me there!
Tongue can ne'er tell the story of the bliss I shall share
When this mortal, in bright immortality dress'd
With rapturous delight shall ascend with the blest.

My own blessed Saviour, my Lord and my God,
Crowns all with His favor, who are washed in His blood.
The song of His praise we'll triumphantly sing;
And loud shouts we will raise to our glorious King.

O, what tranquil repose can this world afford?
What true comfort to those who know not the Lord?
What sweet satisfaction in the pleasures of sin,
Like the blessed attraction of Christ formed within?

How earnest and gladly I all would invite!
O, rush not on madly to the regions of night;
Where the worm dieth not, and the terrible flame
Shall ne'er be put out, but burn ever the same.

O, repent of your sin; and in Jesus believe,
By the door enter in; and you shall receive
From the lips of your Lord, when life's race is run,
The glad, welcome word, faithful servant, well done.

But to sinners, not wholly my words I address;
The Lord says be holy, to all who profess.
Let nothing beguile you; no wrinkle nor stain
That e'er could defile you must on you remain.

Or you cannot enter the bright world above
Where pleasures all center, the heaven of love.
But Christ's blood was shed to cleanse from all sin,
Now His promises plead and be made pure within.

O, let Jesus come in, and reign in your heart,
He'll wash away sin and bid doubting depart.
He'll give you that love that "castest out fear"
And take you above, to dwell with Him there.

ALL IS WELL.

I have little here below,
Of this world a scanty store;
Yet I am not poor, for lo!
Over on the other shore,
Where the just, made perfect, dwell,
There's my treasure; all is well.

Nature's beauties, which unfold
To my friend's admiring sight,
To my vision ne'er unroll;
Lost to me these scenes so bright.
Yet my Saviour doth dispel
Every shadow; all is well.

Things that once I used to love
Have no power to charm me now;
Yet my heart, to things above,
Daily, more attached doth grow
Done the world's alluring spell;
Christ attracts me; all is well.

Once my will was all my own;
I rebelled against my God;
Now I say, Thy will be done.
Washed in Christ's most precious blood,
I have peace words cannot tell;
Jesus saves me; all is well.

Once, by cruel unbelief
I was fettered and oppressed.
Jesus sweetly brings relief;
In His promises I rest.
Every doubt he doth dispel;
Fully trusting, all is well.

The following Summer was to Mary a season of unusual toil and care. Her husband enlarged his farming operations, which rendered it necessary to call in assistance. His son and one of the neighbors were employed for a short time to help him, and boarded with them. This was a severe tax on her physical and mental powers. To provide food, and accomplish other necessary work for a family of four, with her lack of sight and limited experience, was indeed no light task, and her powers of calculation were stretched to their utmost tension to perform it. Her husband rendered her some assistance; yet it was not natural for him to assume any responsibility, or help her in the least in planning her work. She often became very weary, and at such times was well nigh crushed by the weight of discouraged feelings that pressed upon her, and her burdens seemed almost greater than she was able to bear. But in this, as in all former times of need, she found a refuge in her GOD, and a supply of strength was given, sufficient for the duties of each day. There were also some pleasant things connected with this discipline of toil and care. The stay of her husband's son at their home was to her productive of much pleasure. She found in him a kind and sympathizing friend, and became deeply interested in his spiritual and temporal welfare. She conversed with him, with affectionate earnestness, on his eternal interests; and often at the family altar, as well as in her secret devotions, was greatly blessed in praying

for him. He seemed to place implicit confidence in her, frankly expressing his feelings; but professing to be skeptical in regard to the reality of religion: yet Mary firmly believed that he would be led to see his error, and trust in CHRIST.

Notwithstanding his extraordinary exertions during this season, Mr. L. realized but indifferent success. His crops came in very light, and wherever he had looked for prosperity he was met with more or less disappointment. He was belated in settling his business preparatory to their departure, and Winter was upon them before they again left their home. Just before leaving Mary composed the following lines—mostly during the night season while in bed. The thoughts were suggested by having caught a mouse in a trap, and hearing his struggles to escape.

THE MOUSE IN THE TRAP.

I have met a mishap, and I'm caught in a trap
  While my mates are as free as they please.
It is strange, I am sure, I all this must endure
  Just by smelling a wee bit of cheese.

By my appetite led, there is food here, I said;
  I am hungry, and must have a taste;
'Twas food I loved well, I knew by the smell,
  And to it directly did haste.

But I only did touch what I longed for so much,
  When lo! I was caught in a snare;
An unlooked for thing, a horrible spring
  Entrapped me e'er I was aware.

But though I am caught, submit I will not;
  But presently I will be free:
I'll succeed if I try, for surely I'm spry;
  I'll be out in a minute, you'll see.

Ah! poor little mouse, in your lone prison house,
  You cannot get out if you try.
All your efforts are vain, your freedom to gain,
  Though you struggle and toil till you die.

But I have the power in this very hour,
  If I will so, to let you go free;
Yet you'd tremble with fear if I should come near,
  Nor believe me your saviour to be.

O, how small a thing instruction can bring!
  From you I a lesson may get;
For like people you are, who are caught in the snare
  Which Satan so cunning doth set.

There's a trap that's called sin takes humanity in,
  With various baits to allure;
They only can touch what they long for so much,
  When, lo! in the trap they're secure.

Some weary become of their lone prison home,
  And struggle so hard to be free;
Yet all efforts are vain—but increasing their pain;
  For prisoners still they must be.

But there is a friend who assistance will lend;
  He is waiting their needs to relieve.
Yet they tremble with fear when He would draw near,
  Nor His promises precious believe.

But when weary and lone, with no strength of their own,
  All their strugglings and toilings do cease,
Their Deliverer appears, makes an end of their fears,
  And whispers, be free—go in peace.

They visited, on their Winter tour, the daughters of Mr. L. at D. The pleasure of this visit was interrupted only by sickness in one of the families. The kindness and affection manifested toward her by her husband's children was highly gratifying to Mary's feelings, and found a warm response in her loving heart. Being obliged, on their homeward journey, to pass through the town of M., where they had labored the previous year, they could not resist the temptation to stop awhile. They were most cordially received by their numerous friends in that place, who insisted that they should tarry several weeks. While here they visited a family, one of whose members, a little boy 8 years of age, was rapidly wasting away beneath the effects of a cancer. During his protracted illness he was deeply interested in hearing and talking of JESUS and Heaven; but now he was unconscious from the influence of opiates administered to relieve his distress. The father was absent; but they endeavored to point the afflicted mother, by their words and prayers, to the Saviour. The sufferings of the little one were soon terminated by death, and the mother insisted that Mrs. L. should be present at the funeral and address the people on that occasion, though there were two clergymen then residing in the place. This was a source of some trial to Mary. Only twice before had she been called to perform this duty. The preachers were older, both in years and experience, than herself, and she felt, on every account, that it

was far more proper that they should officiate—yet she dared not refuse.

The morning of the day appointed for the funeral the Baptist minister called at the place where they were stopping, and asked M. if she was to attend. She replied that as the mother's request was so urgent, she had reluctantly consented to do so. She then informed him something of her feelings in regard to it, and invited him to be present and assist in the exercises. He offered no objection to this, but made some remarks not at all calculated to comfort her.—He said that on some similar occasions he had felt it his duty to preach; but friends had seen fit to employ others whose efforts had proved a failure. She replied that this case was in the hands of the LORD, and the responsibility rested wholly upon him—that she had no desire of gaining, or fear of losing reputation, whether her effort proved a failure or otherwise. She was blessed with great freedom in addressing the large congregation present, and the parents expressed entire satisfaction with the exercises.

The Winter had not worn away when Mr. L. began to manifest uneasiness in regard to temporal affairs, and a desire to return home. Mary, on the contrary, dreaded to resume her domestic cares, and would gladly have continued to labor in her Master's service; but as she knew not how to do otherwise, she finally yielded to her husband's wishes, and very early in the Spring they once more returned to their humble

home. The effects of Winter lingered long after their return. The deep snows rendered it impossible to attend to agricultural pursuits; and all the circumstances connected with the case combined to prove to M. that they had been prematurely driven from the spiritual field.

From the very commencement reverses seemed to attend them. In whatever he undertook, Mr. L. was more or less unsuccessful, until he became perplexed and disheartened, and almost weary of farming. He now half believed that his wife was right in her convictions relative to his duty, and felt at times that he would gladly dispose of his worldly possessions, and give himself wholly to the work of the Lord. But the idea of being left at this advanced period of life destitute of a home, caused him to shrink from doing so. To Mary housework was becoming more and more distasteful and irksome; and each day confirmed her in her belief, that her mission was not in this direction. Her husband's burdens were also increased by the labor which her infirmity obliged him to perform within doors—so that he was beginning to feel that it did not pay to keep house.

They found, during this Summer, a new field of labor, some nine miles distant from their home, where they had appointments semi-monthly. Sometimes, on these occasions, they left home on Saturday—but more frequently not until Sunday morning. It was no light task for M., after preparing breakfast and attend-

ing to her necessary work, to ride nine miles, speak morning and afternoon, attend social meeting at five o'clock, and return home the same night: yet this she did repeatedly during the Summer, and assumed her household duties, as usual, on Monday mornings. The annual camp-meeting afforded a welcome rest from care and toil, and when free from these encumbrances she felt a great aversion to resuming them.

From the camp-ground they proceeded to their sister's home in H.; and she informed her husband, while there, of her unwillingness to return immediately. He gave her leave of absence for a time, that she might have opportunity to visit and rest—and said he would go home and attend to his business, and provide for himself, as best he could, meanwhile. He accompanied her to the residence of a Christian brother in town, where they had enjoyed many precious seasons, and which was one of Mary's favorite homes. There he left her and returned to his farm.

She learned, soon after her arrival, that this brother and sister purposed to attend camp-meeting in northern Vermont, the ensuing week, and they extended to her an urgent invitation to accompany them. As her purse was empty, however, it seemed impossible for her to do so. She felt that were they sufficiently desirous of her company to volunteer to defray her expenses, her way would be providentially opened, and she ought to go with them. Her feelings also favored this course, as she thought it might introduce her to

new fields of labor. As they continued to urge the matter, she informed them that she should not probably be able to accompany them, though she would be glad to do so. The sister pressed her to reveal the cause of her hesitation—which she finally did. This obstacle was at once removed by her saying, "If you go we shall of course defray your expenses." She could now see no reason why she should not move in this direction; yet, when presenting the subject at the throne of grace, it looked dark and forbidding, and she felt no freedom to do so. Though there was no apparent cause for such feelings, she dared not resist them: and, though her friends seemed to feel that it was her duty to go, she remained firm in her convictions to the contrary.

She returned to her sister's, where she received the intelligence that her husband's younger daughter intended visiting them the following week. Her health was sadly impaired, and her nervous system greatly disordered; and she was going from home in order to obtain rest, and, if possible, regain her lost health. This was an unexpected turn of affairs for poor Mary, and it served to explain her feelings in relation to attending the camp-meeting. But for a short time her spirits were crushed by the burden occasioned by this intelligence. She dearly loved her daughter-in-law, and was more than willing to make any exertion or sacrifice in her power for her welfare or happiness. She would also have been greatly pleased to receive a

visit from her and her family ; yet, under the circumstances, felt herself unequal to these additional responsibilities. But her dear Saviour's promise, "my grace is sufficient for thee," soon came sweetly to her relief—she laid hold upon it with a firm grasp of faith, and it afforded sweet peace and comfort.

The next morning her victory was complete. Having cast her burden on the Lord, she left it with Him, and felt that in His strength she could undertake that which at first seemed impossible. That afternoon her husband unexpectedly made his appearance in one of his gloomiest moods. He had no knowledge of the exact whereabouts of his wife ; but having business in that vicinity, and being belated in his return, he concluded to spend the night with his sister. He had found his stay at home both lonely and inconvenient. Such were his temperament and disposition, that he greately needed counsel, encouragement and sympathy. Besides, he had not the faculty, posessed by some of his sex, of providing for his own wants—looking after his clothing, &c. which rendered the presence of his companion almost indispensable. He seemed to feel that it was cruel in her to leave him thus, though he expressed his willingness that she should do so. His peculiar organism caused him to look upon the dark side of every picture, and the influence he exerted over Mary's mind, when in this desponding state, was exceedingly depressing, yet these seasons were of short duration, and were always followed by penitence for

whatever of grief or sorrow he had brought upon his faithful wife. Though having congratulated herself on enjoying a few more days of rest, M. was constrained, for her husband's sake, to return home with him on the following day.

The daughter came in due time, but did not bring her family as had been expected. Mary never succeeded better, nor accomplished her work with greater ease, than during the time of her visit; and she not only enjoyed the pleasure of her society, but also had the satisfaction of knowing that the interview had brought a few rays of sunshine to the heart of her afflicted and desponding daughter. The old homesick, or sick of home feeling soon returned again to darken Mary's life. She had long desired to visit her friends at L., and this desire was greatly strengthened by receiving, about this time, a letter from one of them. She expressed her feelings to her husband, who felt that she ought not to remain at home any longer; but as his business was yet unsettled, and he was consequently unable to leave, she would not go unless he was provided with a comfortable boarding-place. This she succeeded in obtaining with one of the neighbors, and soon after took her journey toward L. She spent two weeks with his friends at P., where she had an opportunity of sowing some good seed, publicly as well as privately. The meeting with friends at L., after an absence of eighteen months, was indeed a joyous one, and her visit there one of the pleasantest she had ever

enjoyed. But the brightest days of life are often dimmed by sorrow, and a shade of sadness was thrown over these happy hours, occasioned by the thought that some of her friends had no love for her blessed Saviour, and the fear that they might be forever lost.

Another interruption to her happiness was produced by the lack of opportunity of laboring publicly in her Master's work. Though so delightfully situated amid the kindest of earthly friends, she could not be satisfied while deprived of this sacred privilege. Often, when in secret prayer, her desires were strongly drawn out in this direction, and her overflowing heart longed to find vent in declaring, in the great congregation, what the LORD had done for her soul, and pointing others to this precious fountain of love, life and light. Her piety was not only apparent in its influence on her interior being, but also exemplified itself in the minutiæ of her external life—it led her to great plainness and simplicity in her dress; and her feelings upon this point are expressed in the following lines composed by her at this time, while visiting at L.

MY CHOICE.

They sparkle and glitter, those ornaments bright
On your garments so beauteous and fine;
While no such gay splendor attracteth the sight
Of admiring beholders on mine.
I know they are beautiful; yet I desire
No outward adornings like these;
To nobler enjoyments my soul doth aspire;
My blessed Redeemer I'd please.

No gorgeous array like the worldling's I crave ;
But in modest apparel would dress.
The meek, quiet spirit of Jesus I'd have,
And the raiment of His righteousness.
Your beautiful trappings might tempt me to pride
And render me foolish and vain.
But humbly I'd walk by my dear Saviour's side ;
Kept unspotted from sin's slightest stain.

There's a world beyond this in which is my home
Where are far brighter things than are here;
Where no blight of sin or of death, e'er can come,
And the eye is undimmed by a tear.
There my brow shall be decked with a diadem fair,
And my glorified body in white.
There my eyes shall behold the rich splendors so rare
Of the beautiful city of light.

O, my heart leaps with joy at the prospect so sweet ;
And the beauties of earth fade away.
In my breast is a foretaste of glory complete,
To be mine in the soon coming day.
Then marvel not friends, that I should refuse
Earth's splendor, and glitter and show ;
For things far more bright and enduring I choose,
Which shall shine when all perish below.

Her husband joined her at L., and they proceeded thence to the town of P., where they had labored several years before, and where resided a widowed sister who had been greatly blessed through Mary's instrumentality. They arrived at her residence at night, and expected a warm reception, but were greatly disappointed. She was so completely taken by surprise, and her circumstances were such at the time, that she

hardly knew whether she was glad or sorry to see them; though her appearance strongly indicated the latter. Her dwelling had recently been undergoing repairs, and she had no conveniences for lodging them —besides, she was somewhat destitute of the comforts and necessaries of life. Peculiar trials and temptations through which she had of late been passing, instead of bringing her nearer to her Saviour, as they would have done if rightly improved, had caused her to cast away her confidence; in consequence of which her love had grown cold. This was not calculated to increase her pleasure in meeting these friends: nor can we wonder, when we consider these things, at the coolness with which she received them. But those considerations could not lessen the embarrassment which the circumstances occasioned to them. The lateness of the hour, the lack of acquaintances in the place, and the difficulty of traveling, owing to the bad state of the roads, combined to render their prospects dark and forbidding. Mr. L. was sadly dejected, but M., though somewhat cast down, still hopefully trusted in GOD—her only anxiety being on account of the dear sister's sadly backslidden state.

When the first shock occasioned by her surprise had somewhat subsided, she became more cordial in her appearance---expressed herself as being glad to see them, and regretting her inability to entertain them; but she recommended them to a brother, with whom she thought they might find accommodations for the

night, at least. Here they were successful; and as his wife was an invalid, he requested that they should hold a meeting at his house on the following evening, which was Saturday. A goodly number of neighbors assembled, whom Mary addressed with a good degree of freedom. They also held meetings the following day at a school-house near by. This terminated their labors in that place, and they resumed their journey—pausing now and then to labor and visit, until they came to G. Here they held one meeting, which was very thinly attended, while a ball near by at the same time was well patronized. On this occasion M. had no freedom of utterance, and suffered much from depression of spirits. On the way to their lodgings she expressed to her husband feelings of discouragement akin to those uttered by the Prophet when he said, "I will no more speak in His name." So unusual was it for her to be thus overcome, that Mr. L. was almost alarmed in consequence of it.—These feelings, however, were but of short duration, for the return of the morning brought sunshine again to her heart.

Their next destination was the village of N., where they remained but a single day. Mr. L. called on the Methodist preacher in the place, who received him with marked coolness; and, finding no opening for labor there, they left that evening for another part of the town, where they had some acquaintances—thinking it possible they might start next morning on their

homeward journey; but as they met with a cordial reception from their kind friends they concluded to tarry awhile—and, by special request, they appointed a meeting. They intended leaving early the following week, but being pressed with invitations to visit, they tarried longer than they had expected, and were finally persuaded to appoint one more meeting.

The leadings of the HOLY SPIRIT, and the openings of Providence strongly combined to protract their stay week after week. Their congregation steadily increased, and a good degree of interest was manifest in the preaching; but the state of things in this place was truly deplorable. Divisions and jealousies had crept in, in former years, causing breaches which yet remained unhealed: and, as if this was not enough, Satan employed fanaticism as a means of overthrowing, if possible, those whom he could not otherwise destroy.

Mr. and Mrs. L. suffered more or less from each of these influences. Though friendly to all, and studiously endeavoring to avoid every appearance of a party spirit, they were accused of being influenced and prejudiced by some against others, and a degree of coldness and reserve was manifested toward them for a time, by some whom they had supposed to be their best friends. Their meetings were sometimes characterized by a strange lack of freedom. The professed people of GOD were often backward in doing duty; and though a great solemnity and strong conviction

was frequently manifest among the congregation, there was evidently some hindrance to the work of the LORD. Notwithstanding these unfavorable appearances, Mary's faith in GOD remained unshaken; and, looking away from circumstances, upward to Him with whom all things are possible, she continued to labor on, with indefatigable earnestness, though often weighed down with trials and temptations to discouragement. Nor were her labors unsuccessful. Precious fruits were apparent, which, though they might look small to some, greatly gladdened and encouraged her heart; and she was still more cheered by the fond hope of seeing yet greater results in eternity, if not in time.

Hitherto she had been enabled steadfastly to resist every form of temptation by which she had been assailed since coming to this place, and she now began to query what would be the next mode of attack. This query was soon answered in a remarkable and unexpected manner; but she was found not destitute of grace to conquer. They held a prayer-meeting at the house of a brother, one Saturday evening, at which time several brethren were present from a distance, who had frequently attended their former meetings, and who were strongly inclined to fanaticism. They believed in the perpetuity of the gifts manifest in the primitive church—as, healing the sick, speaking with tongues, casting out devils, &c., and that they themselves possessed these gifts. Mary was suf-

fering at this time from extreme fatigue and exhaustion, in consequence of her arduous labors, and she mentioned this fact in the presence of these brethren. Early in the meeting, while she was engaged in vocal prayer, one of them came to her and laid his hands upon her head, in order that she might be healed—retaining his position for some time after she ceased praying vocally.

As has been stated in a former chapter of this history, M. had no doubt as to the willingness of CHRIST, on certain occasions, even at the present day, to heal disease in answer to the true prayer of faith; yet she failed to recognize this movement as the work of the LORD. She would willingly and gladly have given Him the glory, and acknowledged the instrument, could she have felt it to be such. Her heart was lifted to GOD in silent though earnest prayer, that she might not be left to resist His will, or attribute His work to any other source—indeed she had no disposition to do so. It is true, that the moment the hands were laid upon her head, her feelings of weariness left her for the time being; yet there was no corresponding victory in her soul, nor the slightest intimation within, that this temporary relief was produced by the HOLY GHOST. She had some evidence, however, that it was the effect of animal magnetism. A strong prickling sensation was felt about the head, and a strange, indescribable influence ran through her whole frame. Still her mind remained

open to the reception of light upon this point; but she became more and more confirmed in the idea that her first impression was right.

She now began to pray that if this were the case, the human hands might be removed, and her prayer was soon answered. But her greatest trial was yet to come. After they rose from prayer, as she stood up to address the people, a deathly, sinking feeling came over her, so that she was almost fearful of falling. This was accompanied by a sort of choking sensation and difficulty of utterance, which rendered the act of speaking very laborious. These influences she felt that she *must* resist with all her power. This she did by keeping her mind firmly stayed on GOD, and by a mighty effort of her will. This physical distress, however, continued upon her during the whole time of the meeting, attended with a frightful influence upon her mind, as if Satan himself were near her. She several times felt a strong impulse to leave the room; but feeling that this would be an act of cowardice, she resolved, like a bold soldier, to maintain her position, in the name and strength of her blessed Master.

Further developments presented themselves during the meeting, which convinced her, beyond a doubt, that the whole affair was the work of the enemy. Not that she believed these persons to be hypocrites: they were doubtless honest; but possessing strong power of magnetism, and such an inclinatian to fa-

naticism, they attributed this power to the HOLY SPIRIT; and, rushing madly on, impelled by mere impressions, they were led into some egregious errors. They doubtless firmly believed that Mary had been healed through this instrumentality, but was not sufficiently humble to acknowledge it, and therefore it was necessary that the LORD should humble her. This impression was probably so strong upon their minds, that by the power of their will they threw this strange influence over her, which was also felt, to some extent, by nearly all present.

It may be asked, how was Mr. L. affected by these demonstrations? We answer, he was writhing beneath the power of fearful temptations; and when the meeting was closed, his pent-up feelings found vent in a tirade of invectives on such proceedings. His feelings were stirred from their very depths—for the time being almost eclipsing his powers of reason—so that he seemed to blame M. as being, partially at least, the cause of his sore trial, by allowing herself to remain so long in the place, as he had for some time been desirous to leave. This added one more drop to Mary's already full cup; yet the sweet consciousness of having done what she believed to be her duty, imparted to her strong confidence in GOD, which enabled her to remain unmoved amid the fierce storm that was raging around her. For some time after retiring to rest the fearful spell was upon her; but peaceful slumber finally ended the conflict, and the next morn-

ing found her exulting in complete victory. Had she been overcome by the influence thrown over her the past evening, these deluded ones would no doubt have considered it a punishment to her for having disobeyed GOD, and resisted the HOLY GHOST. But however man might judge in regard to the matter, there was not in her heart the slightest shade of condemnation, or sense of the Divine disapproval; and her state of mind in the morning afforded unmistakable proof of her Saviour's presence and favor. Never before had she witnessed such a manifestation of Satan's power; but it had brought a corresponding experience of the all-conquering grace of GOD, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and therefore proved an inestimable blessing. Her heart ascended in adoration and gratitude for this remarkable deliverance from the enemy's cruel snare.

The heavenly dove soon returned again to the breast of her poor, tempted husband. Being humbled and deeply penitent in view of his folly in thus having yielded to temptation, he returned to his forgiving Saviour for pardon and cleansing, and a day of peace succeeded the fearful storm of the previous night.

This was one of Mary's most glorious days. The dark, angry clouds which had so recently hung over her imparted, by contrast, even an unwonted radiance to the sunshine of holy love and joy which now streamed into her soul. Extreme physical debility inclined her at first to plead to be excused from public

labor, and to absent herself from the house of worship: but on looking upward for Divine direction she felt somewhat strengthened, and attended meeting as usual. She addressed a large congregation, both in the morning and afternoon, with great fervor and freedom, besides taking part in the exercises of the evening. She continued gaining strength during the day, and when its labors were ended, her physical condition was far better than when they commenced. An indescribable peace settled down upon her at the close of the day, and she praised her GOD from the depths of an overflowing heart.

Her husband now felt it absolutely necessary to leave the place, but, as heretofore, was unwilling to go without her. As her work, however, seemed not quite completed, he finally consented to leave her. Nearly seven years, with their sunshine and shadow, had now passed away since she gave him her hand in the sacred covenant of marriage, as she believed, in keeping with the Divine will. Being neither actuated by, nor elated with hopes of worldly enjoyment in taking this step, she had suffered no loss from disappointment; but on the contrary, her happiness had far exceeded her anticipations. It is true that her cares, trials and responsibilities had been greatly increased thereby; yet the affection she bore to her dear companion, and the love and sympathy she received from him in return, more than compensated for these additional hardships. She felt, also, that these had served

as a necessary discipline. Her infirmity called forth in him feelings of tenderness toward her which he might otherwise never have known: and the little kind offices he daily performed for her so cheerfully greatly endeared him to her loving heart.

The interest she at first felt in his spiritual welfare continued unabated, and sometimes caused her much anxiety: yet this was greatly mitigated by the sweet assurance that the hand of the LORD was upon him for good, and would bring him safely through. She had also of late become more fully persuaded that, if disentangled from worldly affairs, he might be a power for good in the work of GOD. It was his intention to keep all upon the altar of consecration; yet the tenacity with which he naturally clung to the things of earth sometimes blinded him to a sense of duty. He was now undecided what course to pursue. Had he been sure that the reverses of the two past years were an indication of GOD's displeasure with his proceedings, he would at once have abandoned his worldly pursuits. He returned to his home, intending to move as the openings of Providence might dictate.

As for Mary, she felt an increasing conviction that her place was in the LORD'S vineyard; and she resolved that, let him do as he might, she would remain in the field. She firmly believed that should she steadfastly maintain this course, it would be the means of liberating him. Whereas, should she resume the avocations of domestic life, it would but strengthen

the fetters that bound him. She felt no desire to return to her home; but the constant longings of her heart were for a more extensive sphere of usefulness. And thus we leave her amid dear kind friends whom the LORD had so wonderfully raised up for her—passive at the feet of JESUS—ever looking upward to Him for direction—marking out no plans by the dictation of her own will, but to every prayer, concerning each event of life, affixing her Saviour's blessed words, "not my will but thine be done."

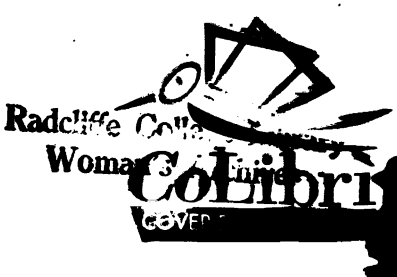
CONCLUSION.

And now, dear reader, we would say in conclusion, if you have read this little work for the sake of criticism, it will fail to accomplish the end for which it is designed. The authoress claims for it no merit in the way of composition. It has been prepared under most unfavorable circumstances, amid a variety and multiplicity of distracting cares and perplexities. In consequence of lack of sight, she has been obliged to arrange the language in her mind, commit it to memory, and then dictate it for others to write, which will at once be seen to have been a laborious task. This enterprise has not been undertaken and pursued without much earnest prayer for help from above, which she feels has been graciously vouchsafed, and which calls forth strong feelings of gratitude to her Heavenly Father. She is also deeply indebted for

valuable assistance to dear, kind, earthly friends—especially to her beloved Mrs. S. the neighbor alluded to in our last chapter—who has voluntarily sacrificed her time, health, and to some extent, at least, even the interests of her own family, in order to help forward this work. Also to Miss. L., a dear young lady, with whom she providentially met at N., who kindly volunteered to assist her by writing. To these, and all others who have lent a helping hand in this matter, she thus extends her most sincere and heart-felt thanks—earnestly praying that they may be "recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

Let none who peruse the incidents contained in these pages view Mary's experience as a fiction too lofty to be real. All exaggeration has been studiously avoided, and an effort made to present the simple facts without undue coloring.

Dear reader, do you, too, desire GOD'S perfect love, and ask how you may obtain it? follow closely the dictations of His Spirit and Word; seek with all the heart, and you will prove His promise true to such as do so; and in your daily life and conversation—in your present and eternal salvation, shall be sweetly and gloriously exemplified the conquest of grace.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